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Session 1

Leo Strauss: I will speak about Rousseau in general and, starting from the most external side, of the way in which he is generally discussed today in this country. To the extent that I know the current literature, Rousseau is today frequently contrasted unfavorably with Locke, and I believe much of the present-day understanding of Rousseau which is available to us is exactly this understanding. The view is this: Locke [is] in a way the father of liberal democracy. [The] simple proof [is] the direct relation of the Declaration of Independence to Locke's *Second Treatise of Civil Government*.¹ Rousseau, [on the other hand], is called a totalitarian, and especially the connection between Rousseau and the French Jacobins is mentioned in this connection. Related to this is [that] the key term in Locke is "property." Locke used the word "property" in a large sense, implying also the body, life, and liberty; but the comprehensive term is "property," and this of course throws also some light on how he understands life, and liberty: as forms of property. "Property" is the key word. In Rousseau, in contradistinction, the key words, one would say, are "liberty" and "equality," surely not "property."

Furthermore, Locke is well known as a man much concerned with a reservation of or for the individual of a private sphere; and therefore, connected with that, he is known and praised as the author of letters on tolerance. Rousseau, on the other hand, is understood to be opposed to this reservation of a private sphere; the famous formula, the social contract, means that the individuals surrender themselves and all their powers to the society. So one can call this totalitarianism. One point I mention right away: whenever one speaks of the totalitarianism of Rousseau, one must in simple fairness say that Rousseau has absolutely nothing to do with present-day totalitarianism, because the totalitarianism which Rousseau praises is the totalitarianism of society, not of the government. That is practically of some importance. You know, when we speak today of totalitarianism, we mean the totalitarianism of government, and only indirectly of society. Rousseau speaks only [of], one could say admits and demands only, the totalitarianism of society. To explain this contrast with Locke: Locke [gives a teaching of] tolerance; Rousseau [gives] a teaching of civil religion, a state religion. The last point in this overall survey of the difference between Rousseau and Locke [is that] Locke stands for representative government—1688—and Rousseau for direct democracy: no representative assemblies, but the citizen body assembling in a town-meeting, as it were, is the legislator. These are the undeniable facts; crude, but undeniable facts.

So you see that since we are today in the grip of the cold war, it appears naturally that Locke is a much better authority for those who are opposed to communism than Rousseau is. But the picture is a bit more complicated, for the following reason: there was one man who was a pupil of Rousseau and had a certain influence on American affairs, and that was Thomas Paine. There was also a connection between Thomas Paine and Thomas Jefferson. So the view which some very patriotic authors now hold, that America was never contaminated by Rousseau, is probably exaggerated. But there is another side of Rousseau where the influence is quite visible. There has been going on for a long time in this country an enterprise called progressive education. You must have

heard of that. Now this is of course directly the work of John Dewey; but the father of progressive education was none other than Rousseau, whose *Emile* is a basic book. I begin with this purely political, not to say ideological, consideration so that we become somewhat critical of this simple labeling.

In order to arrive at a broader view, I would suggest the following consideration: let us look at the consequences of Rousseau, and not take the simplistic view that the French Jacobins were the only men who derived from Rousseau. [It is, of course, true that] Jacobins and all later Jacobinism modified, including Marxism² [derived from Rousseau]. But this is only one offspring of Rousseau; there are others. The other offspring is German idealistic philosophy. That is unthinkable without Rousseau, and that is perfectly clearly stated by Kant, the founder of this German philosophy, who said, "Rousseau has brought me into right shape."ⁱ There is a well-known thing of Kant regarding what he owed to Hume, that Hume awakened him from the dogmatic slumber;ⁱⁱ but the statement about Rousseau is much more far-reaching than the statement about Hume. We will see later on what this means. So German idealism, which has very little to do with Jacobinism and that kind of thing also developed from Rousseau. But above all, romanticism in all its forms has been generated by Rousseau. And that means all notions of *Volk*, of nationalism, those in the peaceful and in the not-so-peaceful understanding, stem from Rousseau; and all sorts of³ [organicists], as they⁴ [came] to be called in the nineteenth century, have their ultimate root in Rousseau. The main point which I must emphasize is this: the German idealism understood itself as viewing man and political society from a loftier point of view than, say, John Locke, especially,⁵ [had] done. And Rousseau has very much to do with this loftier view, as we shall see. The key word of Rousseau is virtue. No one, however enamored of Locke, could say that the key word of John Locke is virtue. Property, yes; freedom, to some extent—ordered freedom. But virtue is not the favorite term of Locke.

The second consideration—I propose, though, that we take a somewhat broader view, and not merely the view generated by the present political situation—is this: Locke and Rousseau, in spite of their antagonisms, have something very important in common. Both begin their political theory with reflections on the state of nature. And the key phenomenon which determines both the state of nature and the transition from the state of nature to civil society, *the* fundamental human phenomenon for both of them, is self-preservation. This is unchanged on the way from Locke to Rousseau. Now, this kind of political theory, which starts from the state of nature and regards as the crucial phenomenon self-preservation, was originated neither by Locke nor Rousseau, but by Hobbes. So what Locke and Rousseau have in common is a Hobbean basis. In other words, however important the difference between Locke and Rousseau is, it is

ⁱ From the notes Kant made in 1764-65 in his own copy of *Observations on the Feeling of the Beautiful and Sublime* (1764). See Immanuel Kant, *Notes and Fragments*, ed. Paul Guyer, trans. Curtis Bowman, Paul Guyer, and Frederick Rauscher (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001), 7.

ⁱⁱ Immanuel Kant, *Prolegomena to any Future Metaphysics*, trans. Paul Carus, rev. James W. Ellington (Indianapolis, IN: Hackett, 2001), 5.

nevertheless a difference on a common ground; and we misunderstand Rousseau as well as Locke if we do not always keep in mind this common ground.

Now, on the basis of this somewhat enlarged view of the situation—I mean, taking into consideration on the one hand that Locke and Rousseau are building on a Hobbean foundation and secondly that Rousseau originated German idealistic philosophy and romanticism—we can perhaps venture this more general statement, which you will take for the time being merely as an assertion, naturally: we are compelled to speak of *modern* political philosophy in an emphatic sense. By this I mean a political philosophy which exists only in modern times. Not all thinkers in modern times were modern political philosophers—the mere fact that someone lives around 1830 or 1960 does not yet [in itself] make him modern⁶. But on the other hand, there is a kind of political thinking which is peculiar to modern times. This characteristically modern political philosophy understood itself as fundamentally different from the earlier kind of political thinking; and this earlier political philosophy was thought to⁷ [have been] originated by Socrates, whose most famous successors are, of course, Plato and Aristotle. Everything which happened afterward in political philosophy strictly understood—so-called Stoicism, even Scholasticism in the most famous cases, at any rate—does not involve a break with this Socratic foundation; great modifications, but no break. But in modern times, and with particular clarity in the case of Hobbes, a conscious break with the whole Socratic tradition took place. This has also a very complicated history, and I will limit myself only to what is indispensable for the present purpose.

Now, this political philosophy—as it was originated by Hobbes in conscious opposition to all earlier political philosophy—was very powerful up, roughly, to the time of the French Revolution. Then its defects led to a new kind of political philosophy, which was however not a return to the ancient, pre-modern political philosophy, but a very profound modification of what Hobbes and his immediate predecessors had said. I will now speak for convenience's sake of the first wave, of Hobbes and so on, and of the second wave, which roughly came into being at the time of the French Revolution. This wave, the second wave, I would tentatively say, was originated by Rousseau. The dissatisfaction with the basic principles of modernity was for the first time stated,⁸ not from an ancient point of view but from⁹ what was then a super-modern point of view, by Rousseau. The only event which I believe we can compare with this great historical importance of Rousseau—for good or for ill, but its importance cannot be denied—is Nietzsche. When the movements generated, quasi, by Rousseau—the German idealism and all its famous followers in other countries, including Great Britain, and also romanticism in all its forms—when they somehow seemed to be unsatisfactory, a new revolution, a new explosion as it were, occurred. And that is Nietzsche, who knew quite well—in fact he said this more than once—[that] his opponent was Rousseau. This is only in the way of a very general provisional statement. But we would be then compelled to try to understand what is the meaning of this second wave of modernity; and therefore we must study Rousseau. This is at least, I think, the broadest way in which one can approach Rousseau. But there are also other reasons, more simple reasons, why one should study Rousseau; it is not necessary to go into them.

Now, in order to study Rousseau, one would [not] have to read¹⁰ everything which Rousseau has written. This can be done only by people who are willing to sacrifice or devote their whole life to the study of Rousseau. There are such people, but we cannot possibly do that; because if you would go into a library and look at a complete edition of Rousseau's works *and* letters, you would become repelled by the magnitude of the task. But there are some writings—and we should at least enumerate them—which are indispensable for an understanding of Rousseau. These are the so-called two *Discourses*: the *First Discourse* and the *Second Discourse*; and there is the *Social Contract* of course, a very small writing, short writing; there is the *Emile*; there is his *Confessions*; and there are some political writings of a more practical nature: the *Government of Poland* and *Corsica*; and there is of course his famous novel, *Julie, or the New Heloise*. These are probably the most important writings, and someone who has read all these and has understood them could claim, I think, to have understood Rousseau. But we cannot do that. To read even a part of them, we shall limit ourselves to the *Second Discourse*, the writing of which Rousseau has said that this was his boldest writing; and the *Emile*, which contains also a summary of the *Social Contract*, so that we are excused for not reading the *Social Contract* here, and especially since the *Emile* is in a way the most fundamental writing of Rousseau. He develops his psychology in the wide sense of the term.

We must begin somehow, and since this is probably the most simple, we read the paper today on the *First Discourse*. The title of the *First Discourse* is "Whether the Restoration of the Sciences and Arts Has Contributed to the Purification of Morals." This was a question raised by a French¹¹ [Academy] in Dijon in 1750 or 1751. Rousseau's answer was: the restoration of sciences and arts has *not* contributed to the purification of morals, but on the contrary it has led to the depravation of morals. The restoration¹² means of course the development since the Renaissance. Was this modern development, from roughly 1500 on, a blessing or a curse? And Rousseau says it was a curse. But the important thing to see is that the academicians who raised this question were at least open to the possibility that the question would have to be answered in the negative, unless the question would be merely rhetorical. So the question was in no way peculiar to Rousseau, but Rousseau was the one who gave this answer in 1751. And, to use a favorite eighteenth century French phrase, he astonished Europe—*il étonna l'Europe*—by saying this is all terrible, the sciences and the arts.

Now, Rousseau states right at the beginning what his point of view is. Rousseau's point of view is not that of the men of the Enlightenment, who called themselves *les esprits forts*—the strong minds, free minds, free-thinkers, or philosophers; nor is it that of the fanatic, of the bigot. But he takes the view of the man who knows nothing: he praises ignorance; he takes the side of virtue or probity against science. But he does this on the basis of the natural right—on the basis of reason. Now I will first give you a kind of summary, and you will see that there are certain difficulties which will lead us somewhat deeper. Rousseau begins the first part of this Discourse by describing the beautiful spectacle of man's¹³ [attempt at] universal knowledge, this magnificent spectacle which was renewed, as he said, in the last few generations, meaning since roughly 1600. Prior to that, Europe lived not in virtuous ignorance, however, but in a state worse than ignorance,

still more despicable than ignorance. That is Rousseau's description of Scholasticism, although the term is not used. So you see, Rousseau is not simply opposed to science, although he is opposed to science. We can say, and that will concern us later, he is opposed to the supremacy of science. I read to you a passage which will be helpful for later discussions.ⁱⁱⁱ "The mind has its needs as well as the body. The needs of the body form the foundation of society; the needs of the mind form the ornament of society." The foundation, the needs of the body; the ornament, the needs of the mind.

Whereas Government and Law provide for the security and well-being of assembled men; Sciences, Letters and Arts, less despotic and more powerful perhaps, extend garlands of flowers on these iron chains . . . and they extinguish in men the feeling for that original liberty for which they seemed to be born, make them love their slavery, and from them what one calls civilized People.^{iv}

We see here already one point which will come up later. Government and laws, these provide iron bonds. They establish slavery. And science and arts are inimical to what Rousseau calls original liberty.

I do not have to go into the argument which takes up most of¹⁴ [this] place [in the text], but which is not particularly interesting because it simply follows . . . is partly trivial and partly a mere consequence. Rousseau's attack on civilization is an attack on the appearance of virtue as distinguished from virtue itself. In other words, people are polite; they are externally nice in their conduct; but their hearts are black. There is no genuine virtue. What we have to keep in mind is this: there is a connection in Rousseau, which we have to explore, between virtue and original liberty. And this original liberty is illustrated to some extent by the famous noble savage, peoples who are not civilized, but for this very reason [are] morally superior to the civilized peoples. You know, this myth has played a very great role, in popular literature especially, and Rousseau is perhaps the most eloquent exponent of this view. But it is only a part of a very long argument. We keep [this] in mind¹⁵; virtue seems to be connected with original liberty.

Now, what is that virtue? We find one definition, and that is this: virtue is the force and vigor of the soul; of the soul, not of the mind. Rousseau does not develop this here, but in some writings more or less contemporary with this, in a *Discourse on the Virtue which is Most Necessary for Heroes*, for example, he says force of the soul is the true foundation

ⁱⁱⁱ The class is using G.D.H. Cole's translation, first published in 1913. See Jean-Jacques Rousseau, *The Social Contract and Discourses*, trans. G.D.H. Cole (London: J. M. Dent, 1913). But Strauss is translating from a French edition. While Strauss's translations are sometimes questionable, as one might expect of a scholar translating on the fly, I will take note of such translations only if they seem significant for the argument or otherwise noteworthy. [Ed.]

^{iv} *First Discourse* (FD), 7-8; 5. Citations are first to Jean-Jacques Rousseau, *Oeuvres Complètes*, 5 volumes, ed. Bernard Gagnebin and Marcel Raymond (Paris: Gallimard, 1959-95), then to an English translation. The *First Discourse* is in volume 3 of the *Oeuvres Complètes*. The translation is Jean-Jacques Rousseau, *Discourse on the Sciences and the Arts (First Discourse) and Polemics*, ed. Roger D. Masters and Christopher Kelly, trans. Judith R. Bush, Roger D. Masters, and Christopher Kelly (Hanover, NH-London: University Press of New England, 1991).

of heroism.^v And this force of the soul is explicitly distinguished from such things as prudence, justice, and moderation. This is one crude element of Rousseau's concept of virtue: virtue [is] connected with original liberty, in essence pre-political, and as we see also amoral. Let us keep this in mind.

I think I must read this to you. This is a good point.

Before art had fashioned our manners and taught our passions to speak an artificial language, our manners^{vi} were rustic, but natural. Human nature was fundamentally not better [LS: Say, these French of the fourteenth century were not better than the French of the eighteenth] but men found their security in the ease with which they could penetrate themselves mutually.^{vii}

So, in other words, they were honest, without being good. Present-day Europeans, eighteenth century Europeans, are dishonest and also not good. But there is a certain virtue in this frankness of insufficient goodness. "Today, where more subtle researches and a more refined taste have reduced the Art of pleasing to principles, there rules in our manners a vile and deceptive uniformity, and all minds seem to be thrown into the same mold. Constantly, politeness demands; decency orders. Constantly, one follows customs, never one's own genius."^{viii}

That is a crucially important passage; I will try to explain that. I have spoken before of the connection between virtue—one meaning of virtue in Rousseau—where virtue is connected with original liberty, with a pre-political state, and something which is fundamentally amoral: the force and vigor of the soul, regardless for which purpose it is used. Now we have another term connected with it: the virtue which Rousseau has in mind is natural, not affected. It is, and that is the key point, individual.¹⁶ We are all by nature individuals. Then we have to submit to rules, to rules of conduct, social rules which command in the main the same for all. We are molded by the same form. This affects, detracts from, our individuality. Now, this notion of the sacredness, as it were, of¹⁷ individuality, would itself lead to the rejection of *any* universal rules or standards. This is already implied in Rousseau, and was developed later on by romanticism, at least by certain branches of romanticism, and today it is indeed very well known. This much about this one concept of virtue which we must keep in mind. To repeat, virtue, the force and vigor of the soul; emphatically natural; in no way molded by society or any law; and meaning individuals' goodness consists not in being good according to any standard of excellence, but in being yourself.

^v Jean-Jacques Rousseau, *Discourse on the Virtue Most Necessary for a Hero*, in *The Social Contract, Discourse on the Virtue Most Necessary for a Hero, Political Fragments, and Geneva Manuscript*, ed. Roger D. Masters and Christopher Kelly, trans. Judith R. Bush, Roger D. Masters, and Christopher Kelly (Hanover, NH-London: University Press of New England, 1994), 9.

^{vi} Strauss's unusual translation of *moeurs*, a notoriously difficult term to translate, which connotes both manners and morals. Strauss also translates *manières* as "manners" earlier in the passage. Cole's translation is "morals."

^{vii} FD, 8; 6.

^{viii} FD, 8; 6.

Now, it gradually appears that Rousseau understands by virtue also something different, namely patriotism, where the emphasis is not on the individual in his individuality, but on the dedication of the individual to the common good, let us say to the fatherland. And in this connection he attacks not the existence of rules, of laws, but rather the cosmopolitanism and skepticism which were so powerful in his age. What the citizen as citizen needs is certainty of conviction, of faith, and regarding himself as belonging to this particular society—French, German, or whatever it is—and not as a citizen of the world. In other words, virtue means in Rousseau also the characteristics of the republican citizen, the republican citizen according to the usage of Montesquieu,^{ix} the great French thinker who died at about the same time when Rousseau emerged, of whom you will know, if not directly, at least from the *Federalist Papers*.¹⁸ [Montesquieu] states [that] the characteristic principle of democracy is virtue, as the principle of monarchy is honor, in the feudal sense, and the principle of despotism is fear. The principle of democracy is virtue. Now this virtue—that is a very long story in Montesquieu itself. But the primary starting point is simply public-spiritedness, full dedication to the public weal, which is not necessary in monarchy, and which is impossible in a despotism. So this is an important point of Rousseau's argument. These two notions of virtue, democratic or republican citizen virtue, and the force and vigor of the soul, as before, are of course very different, because there is apparently a connection between the individualism, if I may use these terms in the sense defined, and skepticism, on the one hand, and between citizen virtue and faith on the other.

The argument proceeds as follows: the corruption of our souls, the decay of virtue, is a consequence of the sciences and the arts. And Rousseau asserts that this is the universal law. He gives examples from the time of ancient Egypt, via Greece and Rome, and up to modern times which all show that effeminacy is the consequence of the cultivation of arts and sciences.¹⁹ [He praises] the simple peoples not affected by sciences and arts, and especially of course of Sparta. Sparta is good and Athens is wicked; which of course has a long pre-history in classical literature, and Rousseau simply takes this up. Yet there is a difficulty which arises [inaudible word] at this point. Rousseau fights science; and science I mean now in the wide sense where it includes also the arts, the fine arts. Now, Rousseau attacks the sciences and the arts in the name of virtue, but virtue has here an ambiguous meaning, as I have indicated. Yet he uses science for fighting science. He uses argument, reasoning. So there must be some science. I mean, there is not only the ambiguity regarding virtue; there is also an ambiguity regarding science. There is a science which is an enemy of virtue, and there is a science which is favorable to virtue. Otherwise Rousseau's own science would not make sense. Rousseau helps us even to identify that science which is favorable to virtue by using the name of Socrates.²⁰ And when Rousseau says of himself he is proud of his ignorance, [that] he knows that he knows nothing, these are simply repetitions, one could say, of what Socrates has said.

So, Socratic science, one might say, is exempted from the verdict against science. He quotes a passage from Plato's *Apology of Socrates*, and—this is very characteristic—it is

^{ix} See Montesquieu, *The Spirit of the Laws*, ed. and trans. Anne Cohler, Basia Miller, and Harold Stone (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989), 1.4.5, 35-36, 1.5.2, 42-43.

in the main correct, what Rousseau quotes, but he makes one change. Socrates' *Apology* criticizes three kinds of men: the statesmen; the craftsmen; and the poets.^x Rousseau deletes the criticism of the craftsmen, and replaces them by the artists. Well, you can easily say there is an etymological connection between artisans and artists; but Rousseau knew what he was doing. What is behind this simple change from the attack on craftsmen into an attack on artists? You can understand that, what he expresses by this change.^{xi}

Student: Perhaps the craftsmen are the simple people whom he is trying to defend, and the artists are the—

LS: Absolutely. So, in other words, craftsmen, together with peasants, were *the* democratic elements in society. And Rousseau's criticism of science is very much connected with a democratic intent, an intent wholly absent from Socrates. So, this we must keep in mind. So then, virtue in one meaning, the meaning of republican virtue, citizen spirit, is very emphatically democratic in the case of Rousseau. The second point is, there is a famous speech which Rousseau put into the mouth of Fabricius, the great Roman general, in which he makes Fabricius praise the good old times when Rome was good and won all battles, and where the conquest of the world is taken for granted as a legitimate goal.^{xii} In other words, virtue in one sense is in Rousseau 100 percent political, emphatically democratic, and by no means averse to republican imperialism.

Now, Rousseau proceeds then . . . I cannot, and it is also not necessary [to go into all the details;] it would only be bad²¹. This praise of ignorance and the condemnation of science²² [are] pursued in various ways. Rousseau goes so far as to say that the sciences are bad. Why is this so? One reason is, of course, their effects: they demoralize, they make peoples less war-like, less reliable in peaceful dealings, etc. They sophisticate men, and therefore make men sophistical. That is one way of putting it. But this is due²³ not only [to] the effect of the sciences, but to their very origin or root. [That] all sciences, including moral philosophy, originate in pride, is Rousseau's assertion. This has all kinds of old connotations, partly Greek, partly Biblical, but the specifically Rousseauan meaning of this [is that] all sciences and arts requiring the development of the intellectual faculties of man make men more unequal than they are by nature. The stronghold, as it were, of inequality is not the mere institutions: you know, that some people are noblemen and others are not. After all, one can easily question that. But the stronghold of inequality²⁴ [is] the difference of natural gifts, and therefore, [it is] especially the cultivation of the natural gifts²⁵ [that] increases that inequality. So out of the democratic interest, the interest in²⁶ [equality], Rousseau opposes the sciences. The cause of virtue is identical with the cause of equality.

^x Plato, *Apology*, 21b-22e.

^{xi} The significance of this change is open to question because Rousseau relies upon Diderot's translation of the *Apology*, which also has "artistes", rather than "artisans." For an account of this matter that maintains that the change, accidental or not, is consistent with Rousseau's distortion of Socrates, see Clifford Orwin, "Rousseau's Socratism," *The Journal of Politics*, Vol. 60, No. 1 (1998), 178 n. 8. See also Jeff J.S. Black, *Rousseau's Critiques of Science: A Commentary on the Discourse on the Sciences and the Arts* (Lanham, MD: Lexington Books, 2009), 281-83.

^{xii} *FD*, 14-15; 11.

I must read you a few more passages. I try to keep the quotation at a minimum. Speaking again of the wickedness of the sciences: “Who would pass his life with sterile contemplations, if everyone would consult only the duties of men and the needs of nature, and had time only for the fatherland, for the unhappy ones, and for his friends?”^{xiii} In other words, if men were truly moral in the sense defined, they would not even have time for any contemplative activities. A rigorous moralism, but obviously a moralism of a political kind: the fatherland is essential here. First I will submit to you the evidence and then we will draw our conclusions. But I ask you to keep in mind two points: the ambiguity of virtue and an ambiguity of science.

Now we come to another point which is essential for the understanding of Rousseau from the very beginning. Sciences are wicked. One [reason] has already been indicated: the waste of time. You engage in some speculations about mathematical problems, or what have you, or even about morals, instead of doing your duty: helping your fellow men, helping your fatherland. So, this is a great evil, the abuse of time. Still greater evils follow the sciences and arts. Such is luxury. One likes the sciences from leisure and from vanity. Vanity, the desire to distinguish oneself.

Luxury occurs rarely without sciences and arts; and sciences and arts occur never without luxury. I know that our Philosophy, always fertile in strange maxims, pretends, against the experience of all centuries, that luxury makes the splendor of the States; but after this philosophy has forgotten the necessity of sumptuary laws, will it dare to deny also that good morals are essential for the duration of Empires and that luxury is diametrically opposed to good morals? That luxury is a certain sign of wealth, that it even contributes . . . to the multiplication of wealth; what must one conclude from this paradox so worthy to be born in our day, and what will become of virtue if one ought to enrich oneself at any price? The Ancient Politicians spoke unceasingly of manners and virtues. Ours speak only of commerce and money.^{xiv}

Now here there is something more specific, as you see, namely not against philosophy in general, but against modern philosophy. Rousseau raises again ²⁷ what had been called some generations before him “the quarrel of the ancients and the moderns.” That was a famous quarrel—especially in France but of course in England; see Swift, *Battle of the Books* (1704). Rousseau raises it again from an anti-modern point of view. This formula is, I think, crucial: the ancient politicians spoke unceasingly of virtues; ours speak of nothing but commerce. Well, is this an intelligible assertion, historically at least? Please tell me, what are the parts universally admitted today of the social sciences? Let us not go into uninteresting subdivisions, but the crude parts: political science, sociology, economics, and some other things. What was the key part of social science in pre-modern times, and to some extent, extending into early modern times; but today it has disappeared?

Student: Economics.

^{xiii} *FD*, 17-18; 13.

^{xiv} *FD*, III, 19; 14.

LS: In pre-modern times? No. What you understand by economics was called originally political economy and came up only in modern times. Yes?

Student: Your question was what was the key of the social thought in pre-modern times?

LS: Yes.

Student: Probably ethics.

LS: Exactly. So then what is the status of ethics in present-day social science? Zero. That is what Rousseau means. Virtue has been replaced by trade and commerce. And this is not merely (as we learn from Rousseau) an affair of the twentieth century, but it has its roots much earlier [in the] seventeenth and eighteenth centur[ies]. This is what Rousseau opposes [and] we must keep this in mind. To repeat, we have spoken of an ambiguity of science. In one sense Rousseau is opposed to science; in another sense, he used it. This remark helps us a bit. He is especially opposed to *modern* science and philosophy. Whether he is not also opposed to ancient [science and philosophy] remains to be seen. A few more passages, then I am through. For example: “we have the physicists, geometrists, chemists, astronomers, poets, musicians, painters; we have no longer the citizens. And if we still have some dispersed on our abandoned, forsaken countryside, they perish there in poverty and contempt”^{xv}. What he means is of course the French peasantry. The contrast between the misery of the common people and the spurious splendor of science and arts, this is another aspect of it, but [it] can easily be summarized [or] subsumed under the general heading republican democratic virtue.

In spite of all this, there is, as Rousseau begins to say at the end of this *Discourse*, no absolute conflict between science and virtue. Now this appears to be first merely a rhetorical move. After all, he wants to get a prize from a learned society, and therefore he has to say something nice about learned societies in general and the underlying belief that learned societies are really something good for the commonweal. This is done slightly ironically, but this is not the chief point. Rousseau admits here the possibility that there may be learned societies who try to give the human race not only pleasant lights, agreeable lights^{xvi}, but also salutary instructions. Now what does this mean? Now I come to the reflection with which he concludes.

If the progress of science and arts has contributed nothing to our true felicity; if it has corrupted our manners; and if the corruption of manners has done harm to the purity of taste [LS: these are things which he allegedly has proved before] what shall we think of that multitude of elementary authors [LS: we would say today “textbook writers,” I would take it] who have taken away from the Temple of the Muses the difficulties which prevented access to it and which nature had established in front of that temple as a test of the forces of the souls^{xvii} who would be tempted to possess knowledge? What shall we think of those Compilers of works who have indiscreetly broken the gate of the Sciences

^{xv} *FD*, 26; 19.

^{xvi} “Lights” is Strauss’s literal translation of Rousseau’s lumières, which can also be translated as “enlightenment.”

^{xvii} An overtranslation. “Those” is better than “souls” here.

and introduced into their²⁸ [Sanctuary] a populace unworthy to approach them; whereas it would be desirable that all those who could not advance far in the career of Letters should have been rejected at the entrance and should have thrown themselves into the Arts useful to society. A man who would be all this life a poor rhymmer, a subaltern Geometer, might have become a great [LS: what do you say²⁹ manufacturer?] manufacturer of [LS: what is *étoffes*?] textiles. Those whom nature had destined to make disciples did not need teachers.

And then he refers to Bacon, to Descartes, to Newton, all modern thinkers:

These Teachers of the human race did not need any teachers If one must permit to some men to decide themselves to the study of the Sciences and the Arts, then only those who will feel the force that they can march alone [LS: *marcher seuls*, [the] phrase used by Descartes in a key passage of his *Discourse on Method*]^{xviii} To this small number it belongs to erect monuments to the glory of the human mind.^{xix}

In brief, Rousseau develops here a thought which is connected with the previous attack on the modern philosophers who have omitted virtue and made the chief theme trade and commerce, trade and money; namely, this modern philosophy is also one which fosters the popularization of science. Science may be bad, but the popularization of science is surely bad. That is another point which we must keep in mind. Yet (and this is a point which Rousseau continues in the sequel) these few men who are by nature destined to be men of science, philosophers, should also enlighten the people; not about irrelevancies, but about their duties.^{xx}

In other words, what Rousseau indicates here is a science which is strictly the preserve of a tiny minority. But this science culminates in what we are entitled to call “scientific ethics.” Scientific ethics which, not as scientific but in its result, is to be taught popularly. Not as scientific, because this would not be susceptible to popularization. A thought which we find clearly expressed by Hobbes who had the hope that his *Leviathan* would take the place of traditional works in Oxford and Cambridge, where the wealthy gentlemen of England and the country gentlemen in particular would then become the transmitters of this teaching to the English populace at large and, therefore, then³⁰ [bring] about a radical change in orientation.^{xxi} Rousseau has something of the same kind in mind, but with a much greater distrust of the popularization of science than Hobbes had.

I read to you this last paragraph, and then we turn to more general discussion.

Oh, virtue, Sublime science of the simple souls, does one then need so much toil and apparatus in order to know thee? Thy principles, are they not engraved in all the hearts,

^{xviii} Descartes, *Discourse on Method*, in *Discourse on Method and Meditations on First Philosophy*, trans. Donald Cress (Indianapolis, IN: Hackett, 1998), 10.

^{xix} *FD*, 28-29; 21.

^{xx} Here Strauss paraphrases the text.

^{xxi} Thomas Hobbes, *Leviathan*, ed. Edwin Curley (Indianapolis, IN-Cambridge: Hackett Publishing, 1994), R & C, para. 16, p. 496.

and is it not sufficient in order to learn thy thoughts^{xxii} to return into oneself and to hear the voice of the conscience while the passions are silent? This is the true Philosophy; let us rest content with it, and without envying the glory of those famous men who make themselves immortal in the republic of letters; let us try to put between them and us this glorious distinction which one once observed between two great Peoples: that the one understood how to speak well and the other how to act well.^{xxiii}

That is, of course, the Spartans and Sparta.^{xxiv}

So, this is the conclusion. Virtue, the science of the simple souls, the conscience. This is not in need of philosophy, as we have heard. On the contrary, it can only be ruined by philosophy. This is one meaning of virtue, where virtue is defined, quasi, by conscience. The voice of nature tells man what he has to do; this is by far the most important thing in every respect. And this can only be endangered, surely not be furthered, by science or philosophy. But there is also another meaning of virtue which we have to consider; namely, where virtue is emphatically republican democratic virtue, patriotism, and where egalitarianism belongs to the same. And the third meaning of virtue is virtue as the force and vigor of the soul; and this does not have a specifically moral meaning. It is connected with original liberty, and here the chief concern is with individuality, being oneself rather than being good in one way or the other. Or if you want to speak of good, you must say to be good means to be yourself.

Rousseau attacks science from these three points of view: from what we can call [the] "moral-Christian," from the political, and from that amoral point of view. It is very easy to show a very large number of contradictions here, but the contradictions disappear if one traces them back to their principles. There are three notions of virtue which guide Rousseau, and which are in themselves clearly distinguished. In spite of this attack on science in the names of these three views of virtue, Rousseau admits the need for science somehow. But the science needed is definitely not a popularized and a popularizable science. He attacks what we must call the Enlightenment: the attempt to improve the human condition by the diffusion of science and scientific knowledge. This attack on the Enlightenment is obviously connected with the famous quarrel between the ancients and moderns. The enlightening philosophy was modern philosophy; the science which was not essentially enlightening was ancient philosophy. The explicit criticism of the modern we have seen also in that passage where he opposes virtue, [which] concerned classical thought³¹ [to] commerce, [which] concerned modern thought. The genuine science which Rousseau demands must enlighten the people about their duties.

[There is a break in the tape]

LS: [tape resumes in progress] —summarize this point that in spite of the fact that Rousseau is very critical of modern political philosophy,³² which includes the early form

^{xxii} The transcription records Strauss as saying "thoughts," which is a slip either by Strauss or the transcriber. The text reads "laws."

^{xxiii} *FD*, 29; 22.

^{xxiv} While Strauss here may have meant Athens and Sparta, he may also have meant to refer only to the Spartans here, the people that understood how to act well.

of modern economic science. This is long before Adam Smith but [a] considerable time after Mandeville,^{xxv} for example. And also one of the most important economic thinkers, although he is probably not mentioned in the ordinary history of economic thought, was Montesquieu himself, to whom³³ [Rousseau] refers without mentioning his name. That was the originator of political economy. You know, economics meant originally the management of the household; public finance was not recognized as part of economics. Public finance existed at all times, but the study of that—which was of course never classroom study³⁴ [but was transmitted in the ruling families of Rome]. In Athens too—that was not a technical science. But political economy emerged only in the modern era; and the first man, I think, of importance is an Englishman, Sir William Petty, who was an acquaintance if not a pupil of Thomas Hobbes. If you scratch the surface of the sciences and go a bit deeper, then you always come to philosophy. That can't be helped. So in this case, scratch Sir William Petty and you discover Thomas Hobbes. Sir William Petty had made this very interesting thing: he tried to find out what the worth of a human being is; you know, *money* worth. An interesting question. And he (very ingenious man) found a way. He said, well, go to the slave market in Algiers. Here you get empirical evidence. But he found out, I think—I do not know whether it was one pound. He did not go into the subtle question of whether he was very strong or weak or . . . I suppose there must have been a rate for the very prime human being. And then Montesquieu made this remark: this is wrong, this [inaudible word] that Sir William did, because this is only the price of an Englishman.^{xxvi} There are countries in which a human being has a much smaller value than that, and there are even countries where the value of a human being is zero, and in others even less than zero. He had of course in mind countries which were starving all the time. Now this is one point which Rousseau mentions in his attack on this modern approach.

Rousseau's attack on science is ambiguous. He speaks very frequently as if he were opposed to science simply. But there are enough passages which show the opposite. But one thing seems indeed to be clear: he attacks surely the supremacy of science. Now, how does this look in the light of pre-Rousseauan thought,³⁵ if we take a kind of³⁶ [bird's eye] view? First of all, what was the pre-modern view? What is it? Simple textbook knowledge which everyone should have [or] might have, at least. Well, the theoretical life, the life devoted to contemplation is the perfection of man. [This is] clearly the Aristotelian point of view, but one also visible enough in the whole Socratic tradition. [For] Socrates, virtue is knowledge. That cuts both ways. Some people say that was radically changed by the Stoics, who put the whole emphasis on morals as distinguished from knowledge, but that is not quite true. For the Stoics, virtue is the key word, but virtue is at least inseparable from knowledge. The Stoics called such things as logic and physics virtues.³⁷ We must not impute to them an eighteenth century understanding of morality.

The main point, what strikes us at first now in Rousseau I believe is the assertion of the supremacy of morality—not understanding, but acting morally is the only thing which

^{xxv} Bernard Mandeville (1670-1733), philosopher and author of *Fable of the Bees* (1714).

^{xxvi} Montesquieu, 1989, Book 32, Chapter 17, 439. Petty (1623-87) was the author of "An Essay on Political Arithmetick" (1686).

ultimately counts. To show the peculiarity of this assertion (I do not say it is peculiar to Rousseau, but it is characteristic of part of his age): morality and not science, morality and not religion (that is the other side). Not religion. Religion means³⁸ [positive] religion, Christianity, Judaism, or whatever it may be. Morality is the only thing which counts; morality is the only proper bond of society. When you take Hobbes, for example; how would Hobbes stand here regarding this point? What is the thing which counts ultimately, the one thing for Hobbes? Morality, science, or religion?

Student: Fear of violent death?

LS: Yes, but what is the consequence of fear of violent death?

Student: Self-preservation.

LS: Yes, but where does it lead? Rousseau also admits that, as we shall see.

Student: For Hobbes it is morality.

LS: Is it morality?

Student: Knowledge or science is the means for avoiding violent death.

LS: I believe that is better.³⁹ [Hobbes] says, science for the sake of power,⁴⁰ or let us put it more generally, reason in the service of power. That would include both science and the Leviathan state. In other words, Hobbes's thesis is very different from Rousseau's thesis. But Rousseau's thesis was taken up by a man in many respects greater than he, namely Kant, the German philosopher. Kant expressed this thought,⁴¹ which he admitted that he had learned⁴² from Rousseau. Kant's expression of this thought is the primacy of practical reason, i.e. of moral reason. The only thing of absolute worth, Kant says, is morality. Kant calls it more specifically the good will, but the good will strictly understood in the moral sense. But what is the good will? Well, the will in agreement with the moral law; you can say that. But what is the precise relation between the good will and the moral law; because it could have been said in this way on a much earlier basis.⁴³ According to the older view, of course, the moral law precedes the good will. The human reason apprehends the moral law and on the basis of this apprehension the guidance of the will becomes possible. For Kant the will and practical reason become identical, as he explicitly says.^{xxvii} There is no longer the possibility of an apprehension of the moral law which is not the willing of it. One can say with a slight exaggeration, but a necessary one in our context, [that] the good will is the one which originates the moral law, because the moral law in order to be the moral law must originate in the individual: I must impose that law upon myself. This means that freedom takes on a primacy compared with the moral law, and this reminds us of course of Rousseau's talk about that original liberty that is absolutely sacred and fundamental.

^{xxvii} Immanuel Kant, *Groundwork of the Metaphysics of Morals*, ed. and trans. Mary Gregor (Cambridge-New York: Cambridge University Press, 1998), 24.

Kant's overall development of this thought—the overall development, not the details—is much simpler and clearer than Rousseau's. This is due to the fact that Kant destroyed the possibility of the primacy of theoretical reason. What does⁴⁴ [that] mean? Theoretical reason, the reason effective in the sciences, consisted roughly in Kant's time and even later of two⁴⁵ [parts]: physics and metaphysics. Physics, which had become by Kant's time Newtonian physics⁴⁶ [and] was also the starting point of Rousseau, is shown by Kant to be of validity merely for what he called the phenomenal world. This has no absolute dignity. This is not a knowledge of reality in itself. The knowledge of reality in itself remained, then, metaphysics. But Kant (and that is the precise step) tried to prove the impossibility of metaphysics. Impossibility. Given the fact that metaphysics is impossible⁴⁷ and that physics is only phenomenally valid, the only absolute knowledge, the only knowledge of the absolute admitted by Kant, is knowledge of the moral law. And this means of course that the moral law cannot have any foundation in any physical or metaphysical knowledge. It must be originated and originating only in the will itself. Rousseau does not do that. Perhaps one could say he was unable to do that, not having that particular genius which Kant had; perhaps so. But it could also be different—perhaps he had a feeling [or] some instinct protecting him against the Kantian opinion. We must see. At any rate, Rousseau preserves the possibility of theoretical science much more than Kant does and we have to see, to understand, this theoretical science which is the basis of Rousseau's moral and political teaching. The two chief sources for that are exactly the *Second Discourse* and the *Emile*. And we will study them.

Now the most interesting and original concept of Rousseau regarding moral matters which emerges from the *First Discourse* is the one which I designated by this very ambiguous term individualism.⁴⁸ I tried to define it somewhat but I will repeat that: to be good means to be oneself. You know, individualism can have many meanings. For example, the individual should have considerable freedom to do what he likes or to develop according to his nature, and this kind of thing. That is not the key point. The key point is to be yourself. At the beginning of the *Confessions*, Rousseau says—do you remember that passage, Mr. Butterworth? How he writes of the uniqueness of his being, and God destroyed the mold, and something of this kind?

Charles Butterworth: “After I was created, God must have broken the casting—”^{xxviii}

LS: If man is absolutely individual then the most important (at least in the last resort most important) consideration is that this individuality be cultivated. In a subordinate sense this makes of course much sense, and a man would have to read Cicero's *Offices*. For example, you are confronted with the question [of] which profession you should choose. Naturally only a fool would completely disregard his peculiar aptitudes. I mean, if he is very good at mathematics, very good, it would be a pity if he would not at least cultivate it. Or music, or whatever. But this is of course not what is meant by Rousseau. It leads to

^{xxviii} Jean-Jacques Rousseau, *The Confessions*, ed. Christopher Kelly, Roger D. Masters, and Peter G. Stillman, trans. Christopher Kelly (Hanover, NH-London: University Press of New England, 1995), 5. Rousseau refers to nature, not God, here.

the consequence that the key point is this: the individualism which Rousseau has in mind is incompatible with the very idea of theory, of theoretical knowledge. There is no universal of any kind which can give us direction in the decisive respect.

In the older classical view, to become good meant to conform oneself to a pattern which is not individual. And that is of course true not only of classical philosophy, but also of other. For example, take the Ten Commandments. The Ten Commandments state these things universally for all men: thou shalt not kill, and so on. Imitation of an unchangeable pattern; and the most famous and grandest formula is, of course, imitation of God, a formula going back to Plato. So we should not be concerned with originality but with imitation. That is, one can say, the message of the whole tradition. I mean, it is quite amusing that there are so many human beings—not so very many, but some—who are original. But that is accidental: both that they are and that they are amusing and exhilarating, and perhaps sometimes even more than that. But not the concern with originality. Originality can only be, in the good sense, it would be an accidental by-product of an attempt directed not toward originality but toward imitation. If this very profound change of moral orientation has been furthered very considerably by Rousseau, the most well-known form of this change is to be found in the field called “aesthetics.” Everyone who has read for the first time Plato or Aristotle on the basis of modern indoctrination must have been struck by the fact that the poetry and the fine arts are called “imitative arts.” And you must have read this n times: that may be true of photography—that it is imitating—but not of a painter. And not even of photography after we have seen this amazing development where you have to be an artist in order to be a respectable photographer, as I have been told. The word which—what took the place of imitation?⁴⁹

Student: Creation.

LS: Creation. That is diametrically opposite to that. And this creativity is, of course, essentially individual. Because the creative artist must be himself. If he imitates masters, he ceases to be creative. He may learn certain techniques from others, but that belongs only to the lower level of his activity. The true thing is creativity. These things we must keep in mind; and we can easily see how the meaning of freedom must be radically affected when freedom is seen in the context of imitation on the one hand and the context of creativity on the other. It leads of course to very funny consequences in practice, as this modern notion when people are asked to be, as it were, original. Or as it happens—it is hard to believe, but it is undeniably true—that in many schools in this country now, children who have not even learned to master the letters and the simple arithmetical operations on small numbers are asked to write a creative essay. That is unbelievable, but true. But Mr. Morrison, the defender of the modern—

Mr. Morrison: No, I am not.

LS: All right.

Mr. Morrison: I just wanted to ask⁵⁰ where exactly Rousseau stands on this, the turning around of these things?

LS: Well, all right; let us use this wonderful technique so helpful for understanding, namely, the blackboard. So, we have distinguished three meanings of virtue. And let us start from the end—which I will call the “moral-Christian,” without making a distinction—where conscience is the key word. The second is the notion of the “republican-democratic-egalitarian virtue” —I indicate that by “P”—by which I do not mean that they are incompatible. I mean that they are only the preponderant notions. Do you see that this leads then to a conflict? The simple proof is Machiavelli’s *Discourses*, where on the surface of the work patriotism is written large and subjects to itself the conscience completely; and vice versa, of course. The third is what I call with a very poor word, “individualism,” and which is connected with original liberty, a liberty not yet tainted by any laws, human or divine. Is this clear? Three kinds.⁵¹ Then there is nothing limiting the original liberty, and the difficulty for men is rather that they lose it so easily. They sell out to universal rules of a low, or even of a high kind. Oh, I know how I can help you. In present-day sociology, the distinction is used which goes back ultimately to Rousseau—but there are certain intermediates—between other-directed, self-directed, and tradition-directed people.^{xxix} You have heard of that? You will not pass the examination if you do not know that. Good. Now, the *self*-directed: what does this mean? I mean, the other-directed is clear: we want to keep up with the Joneses, and this kind of thing. The tradition-directed is also clear: tradition directs him, whatever the tradition may be. The self-directed man: what does it mean? He himself directs him. With a view to what? To what does he look in directing himself?

Student: Self-realization.

LS: All right; but what is that self which he realizes? His individual self. Be thyself. That is the point. Be thyself. And to be oneself means exactly not to build up oneself, to edify oneself in the original meaning of edification with a view to a pattern not laid by oneself but found, discovered, not invented. Is this now clear, Mr. Morrison, this distinction? All three notions lead to the denial of the supremacy of the theoretical life. Is this clear? But I will repeat it: if to act virtuously, to help one’s neighbor in whatever belongs to him, is the one thing needful, then the theoretical life cannot be the one thing needful. That can be only admitted as being in the service of helping the others. For example, if we assume, say, that medicine is a way of helping other people, and even basic research in medicine would, of course, also be necessary, then the justification of the basic cancer research would be this moral-Christian teaching. The second, patriotism. If this is the highest thing, dedication to the common good, the contemplative life cannot be. And the third is also clear: because there is nothing higher⁵² than the self and its realization. Nothing universal, the knowledge of which can be the highest. So this much is clear.

But to complete my picture, I will also remind you of this ambiguity regarding the other item: science. There is science in one sense which Rousseau rejects. And let us call it in the simplest way autonomous science. But then there is another science which he admits,

^{xxix} See David Riesman’s *The Lonely Crowd* (1950).

which we may call ministerial science: a science in the service of any of these three meanings of virtue. From this point of view then, the key question would be, what is the status of these three meanings of virtue in Rousseau? I asserted today that this is the core. This needs of course proof, but I did this on the basis of my earlier reading of Rousseau. And I may be wrong. But the fact which no one can deny is that these three meanings of virtue are present, and the emphasis on that is justified because this is surely not a traditional notion, whereas the older notions were traditional. Where is now your difficulty?

Mr. Morrison: I think it is resolved.

LS: It is resolved. Yes?

Student: Between the virtue of the noble savage of the past and the virtue characteristic in modern man of science, which is superior, according to Rousseau?

LS: I shouldn't complain, because I speak also very [inaudible word]

Same Student: [Repeats question]

LS: I can give you only a provisional answer. The noble savage⁵³ has more to do with number three than with number one.^{xxx} That is a very provisional answer. The attraction which the noble savage has for Rousseau is that it is⁵⁴ [inaudible words] which reminds him of the possibility which is lost in [inaudible words]; and Rousseau ultimately does not agree with the noble savage, but what you can say is this: what he is after is a *most* noble savage, not a noble savage. This most noble savage—the best expression I have found for that in. . . . The most noble savage is an artist; not the philosopher, but the artist. Do you see the connection between the noble savage and the [inaudible words.] That would be too local a point for what I have in mind. It sounds only funny, but there is something to that.

Student: Are you going to talk about the relationship between virtue and freedom?

LS: We have to. No, there is one point. Rousseau makes the distinction explicit—and I am so out of Rousseau that I do not even remember where—between virtue and goodness. You remember where.

Student: I don't remember; but I think it is in the *Second Discourse*, at least in one form.^{xxxi}

^{xxx} That is, with virtue as “individualism” more than with virtue as “moral/Christian.”

^{xxxi} *SD*, 152-57; 35-38. The *Second Discourse* is in Vol. III of the *OC*. The translation is Jean-Jacques Rousseau, *Discourse on the Origins of Inequality, in Discourse on the Origins of Inequality (Second Discourse, Polemics, and Political Economy*, ed. Roger D. Masters and Christopher Kelly, trans. Judith R. Bush, Roger D. Masters, Christopher Kelly, and Terence Marshall (Hanover, NH-London: University Press of New England, 1992), 34-38. If the distinction is not yet explicit, it is close enough.

LS: Perhaps. I am sure by the end of the quarter you will remember. We all will remember. Now, virtue and goodness are radically different. What is that? If we try to put it in here, in this schema, virtue is one and two, and one or two.^{xxxii} That is difficult. This is goodness [LS indicates three^{xxxiii}] Virtue and goodness are radically different, because virtue presupposes law and submission to the law; obedience to the law; compliance with the law; conformity to the law. Goodness is lawless, anarchic. Original liberty. Original liberty is the liberty preceding all law—that is essential—and therefore it is amoral. Now, Rousseau tried to some extent to make this palatable to himself and to others by saying, original liberty, being oneself, *is* goodness, because it is inseparable from compassion. To be yourself means also, and perhaps even chiefly, to be compassionate. So now, assuming that compassion is the root of all social virtue, then of course it would be very simple to say, be yourself means the same as to be kind and good. Unfortunately, things are not so simple, and Rousseau himself saw that surely to some extent. But this will already come out in the *Second Discourse* where compassion comes in.

Student: The thing that I was trying to drive at was [inaudible word] the freedom and the liberty for which virtue one and two are suggested up there as well as three. One thing which comes to mind is the *Discourse on Political Economy*, where he suggests all virtue suggests love-of-fatherland-virtue and virtue-in-liberty . . . no, being a good citizen and virtue of liberty, and finally brings a well-established fatherland.^{xxxiv}

LS: That is really the question we have to discuss in the whole course. That Rousseau tried in a way to produce a perfect harmony between the three is undeniable. But I believe that there is also great evidence that he did not succeed, and that he knew he did not succeed. And the simple proof is the very first sentence of the first chapter of the *Social Contract*.^{xxxv} Social life, and that includes [inaudible words], any form of duties is a form of labor. Freedom is beyond society, beyond duty; and therefore . . . Well, if we look at the crudest thing, the consequences of Rousseau, at one extreme, one could say,⁵⁵ [are] Kant and Hegel, the Germans, who produced a perfect harmony between morality and the state, one way or the other . . . and duty, between duty and the state. But the other extreme of Rousseau is anarchism, which is also one of the genuine legitimate children of Rousseau. Anarchism; the people who did go to the woods and refused to have anything to do with society. That is as legitimate to Rousseau as the classic Germans. By the way, Marx comes from this whole problem, via Hegel, naturally; but there is also another connection between Marx and Rousseau, as we will see. That has to do with the fact that civil society is, according to Rousseau, absolutely necessary, but essentially defective. There cannot be a state without self-contradiction. And this contradiction has to do with

^{xxxii} The moral-Christian and/or patriotism.

^{xxxiii} Individualism

^{xxxiv} The student's question is garbled but he presumably has in mind the section of the *Political Economy* in which, arguably, all three senses of virtue named by Strauss are woven together (Rousseau, 1992, 145-49).

^{xxxv} "Man was/is born free, and everywhere he is in chains" (Rousseau, 1994, 1.1, p. 131). If man is in chains in civil society, then virtue as individualism and virtue as patriotism, at least, seem incompatible.

the fact that civil society is based on the principle of private property. That will become very clear in the *Second Discourse*, but it will also become clear from other things. Private property is a harsh, uncompassionate, almost inhuman thing. But without it, [there is] no civil society. And Marx, in the goodness of his heart, thought there could be a society in which property would cease to exist; in which inhumanity would therefore cease to exist; and in which therefore no coercion of any kind would need to exist, i.e. a universal world state, no longer a society. But the interesting point is this, that Marx tried to solve the Rousseauan problem, and that if one understands that Rousseauan problem one has a better access to Marx than otherwise. We will try to make this clear later on. But for our primary orientation, I believe this distinction will be helpful. Mr. Seltzer?

Alan Seltzer: I have heard it said that the *Emile* is a very difficult book. And therefore, I wonder if you might say just a few words⁵⁶ [of] introductory guidance in how to read the *Emile*.

LS: As for your general statement that it is a very difficult book; that is true; but I would say it is also trivial. All the books we read in these seminars are difficult. Because otherwise why should we read them in class. And there is no rule of reading except to read carefully. I mean, everyone who does not know the original language always is a bit handicapped because he has to trust a translator who may or may not be competent, conscientious or not. I have not yet looked at this translation. I know that Cole, the translator of the other things made incredible, did incredible [inaudible word]. Really, I mean, he is, I think, an English politician. Mr. Morrison can tell us everything about this G.D. Cole.

Mr. Morrison: Yes, he is very famous. He was one of the stalwarts of the Fabian Society. He was a professor for many, many years at Oxford; greatly revered. He died recently.^{xxxvi}

LS: Yes. Well, that shows the complicated relation between loyalty and competence as a translator.

Mr. Morrison: I remembered noticing myself when I first saw this translation, as far as I am aware, while he has written detective stories, this is the only work of translation which he has ever done⁵⁷.

LS: I read these once, and they are good.

Mr. Morrison: Very good.

LS: In a way a greater merit than the translation from French, which after all should not be necessary, because French is not such a difficult language to learn.

^{xxxvi} G.D.H. Cole (1889-1959) wrote many books on socialism and was also, as the discussion notes, the co-author, with his wife Margaret Isabel Cole, of a number of mystery novels. He was, indeed, a long-time member of the Fabian Society, serving as president after 1952. He was the Chichele Professor of Social and Political Theory at Oxford and a fellow of All Soul's College.

Mr. Morrison: Also he has done some very good work on the history of European Socialism.

LS: I see; yes. I hope he didn't have to rely on French thought. So, try your best, and you have already done some work, and you know better than quite a few others.

[Tape ends. Discussion of assignment of papers follows.]

¹ Deleted "whereas."

² Deleted "which is of course true."

³ Deleted "organic."

⁴ Deleted "claimed."

⁵ Deleted "has."

⁶ Moved "in itself."

⁷ Deleted "be."

⁸ Deleted "but."

⁹ Deleted "a so-to-say super-modern point of view."

¹⁰ Moved "not."

¹¹ Deleted "*Académie*."

¹² Deleted "this."

¹³ Deleted "attended."

¹⁴ Deleted "the."

¹⁵ Moved "this."

¹⁶ Deleted "individual."

¹⁷ Deleted "the."

¹⁸ Deleted Rousseau."

¹⁹ Deleted "Praise of."

²⁰ Deleted "Socrates."

²¹ Deleted "if I would go into all the details."

²² Deleted "is."

²³ Deleted "also to the fact."

²⁴ Deleted “are.”

²⁵ Deleted “which.”

²⁶ Deleted “inequality.”

²⁷ Deleted “in other words.”

²⁸ Deleted “sanctity.”

²⁹ Deleted “publicant?.”

³⁰ Deleted “bringing.”

³¹ Deleted “whereas.”

³² Deleted “and.”

³³ Deleted “he.”

³⁴ Deleted “but in families—in the ruling families in Rome that was transmitted.”

³⁵ Deleted “I mean.”

³⁶ Deleted “bird-like.”

³⁷ Deleted “I mean.”

³⁸ Deleted “posited.”

³⁹ Deleted “Rousseau.”

⁴⁰ Deleted “In other words, science for the sake of power; this concept.”

⁴¹ Deleted “of.”

⁴² Deleted “it.”

⁴³ Deleted “well.”

⁴⁴ Deleted “it.”

⁴⁵ Deleted “points.”

⁴⁶ Deleted “which.”

⁴⁷ Deleted “on the one hand.”

⁴⁸ Deleted “I mean.”

⁴⁹ Deleted “What took the place of imitation?”

⁵⁰ Deleted “how.”

⁵¹ Deleted “this.”

⁵² Deleted second “nothing higher.”

⁵³ Deleted “has something to do with.”

⁵⁴ Deleted “a kind of.”

⁵⁵ Deleted “is.”

⁵⁶ Deleted “as an.”

⁵⁷ Deleted “as far as I know.”

Session 2

[In progress] **Leo Strauss**: —statedⁱ what the main issue in that prefatory material is. I would like to repeat that. First the question, is inequality permitted by natural law? Because the overall impression you get from the rhetoric of the book [is] that [it] is a strictly egalitarian statement. And you said quite rightly that Rousseau is not simply egalitarian. There is even a natural inequality, which is as naturally good [as natural equality]; and there is in addition a legitimate legal inequality, that of the rulers and the ruled. The latter is of course admitted by every democrat who is not an anarchist. Because he admits that there are governors who, as governors, are superior.

The second point which you stressed was the key importance of self-preservation, both for the political society and for the individual. The third point, the distinction between natural right and natural law, which in this form seems to be Rousseau's own, natural right belonging to sentiment, as you put it, and natural law to reason. And the last point, the possible conflict with religion. Here it would have been better if you had made clear, at least in a clause, that by religion you mean here positive¹ Biblical religion, not natural religion. That would be a different matter. Now, this question of religion will be taken up—both natural and positive—in the section of the *Emile* devoted to the Profession of Faith of the Savoyard Vicar, which deals both with natural and positive religion. We will take that up later. Now, that is all right.

Now, we must of course establish first a connection between today's assignment and what we discussed last time. I try to state the result of our discussion of the *First Discourse* in the simplest and, I hope, clearest form possible. Science is bad for virtue. That means autonomous science is bad for virtue. Science must be ministerial; it must be in the service of virtue. This statement is clearly opposed to an alternative very well known both in that time and later. Science is, I mean, opposed not only to Aristotle's praise of the theoretical life; it is also opposed to the view of Bacon, Descartes, and Hobbes: science in the service of power, of human power, for the relief of man's estate. Science must be in the service of virtue. That is to say science² above all culminates in a teaching of men's duties, or perhaps rights. That we still leave open. At least this is the most important *public* function of science: to teach men their duties and perhaps their rights.

Now, regarding virtue, there was a great ambiguity. I repeat the three meanings. First, the moral-Christian meaning, where virtue is connected with the conscience, and here understood in the usual sense of the word. The second is the view that virtue is political, republican, not to say democratic virtue, identical with patriotism. Virtue in both these senses presupposes law of some sort. Then there is a third meaning of virtue in which it does not presuppose law, and that virtue is connected with original liberty, with naturalness or individuality; and where it is simply the force and vigor of the soul in an amoral sense. Now, after having reminded you of that, we must keep this in mind as the question. The question can be stated more simply: what is the exact relation between these three meanings of virtue? Which has the right of way? This we must keep in mind as a question.

ⁱ Strauss is here discussing a seminar paper, probably by Mr. Butterworth, that is not recorded.

We turn to the *Second Discourse* and today the prefatory material. There is first the Dedication to the Republic of Geneva, and just in case someone does not know it, Rousseau was born in Geneva. He was technically even a citizen still of Geneva, I mean he voted there.ⁱⁱ Geneva was a republic, whereas Europe was generally covered with absolute monarchies, at least the continent. And Geneva was in addition a small republic; a city. It was something like an ancient polis of the Platonic and Aristotelian notion of the perfect society, contrasted with the modern territorial states which seemed to demand monarchy—the doctrine of Montesquieu. Montesquieu roughly died at the time when Rousseau appeared, and Rousseau knew him, of course, very well. Montesquieu had said republics (i.e. free commonwealths) are possible only as small societies, as cities. If you have a larger society, then you must have monarchy, which has³ [its] kind of freedom—you know, there was a kind of freedom in old France—and if you have a very large state, like Turkey or Persia, both very large, then you must have despotism. Now, this doctrine is presupposed. Those of you who have ever read the *Federalist Papers* (i.e. all of you), remember the discussion of⁴ [whether] it [is] possible to have freedom in a large country. You know, the whole issue of federalism in this country is still somehow linked up with this issue. So, this is a book in favor of freedom, obviously, liberty and equality in a very general sense. Rousseau has a kind of moral right to do that because he is a son of Geneva. And he makes this quite clear by dedicating the book to the republic of Geneva.

The first question which we should perhaps raise is, what about Rousseau's praise of Geneva? What does he think about Geneva in general? You have answered the question, Mr. Butterworth, but I want you to repeat it.

Mr. Butterworth: He is constantly . . . he always lauds Geneva, [inaudible words] of Geneva, and praises the manner in which her government exists.

LS: Yes. In other words, there are statements to this effect, are there not?

Mr. Butterworth: In his whole work.

LS: But especially here. That is, “a Republic so sagely and so felicitously constituted”ⁱⁱⁱ for the public [inaudible words]. He seems to present Geneva as the perfect republic. But is this unqualifiedly true? I mean, are there not slight reservations? Well, Mr. Seltzer brought up a question last time at the end of the meeting, and I really did not understand the bearing of the question. I believe I can answer it as follows. You asked how one should read Rousseau, and I said thoroughly. That is clear. But of course this is also too general to be useful. Therefore I would like to make it somewhat more specific. To begin with, everyone reads authors according to his previous habits, and these previous habits are not only his own work. They are the work of his upbringing, of his society. Now, we live in a liberal society in this precise sense: there is a

ⁱⁱ Strauss is a bit misleading here. While Rousseau regained his citizenship shortly before the *Second Discourse* was published, he had not been a citizen for many years, having converted to Catholicism over twenty years prior. In order to recover legal citizenship, Rousseau traveled to Geneva and converted back to Protestantism. He took the trip after the *Second Discourse* was written but before it was published. While the Dedicatory Letter Strauss is discussing was completed after the rest of the *Discourse*, it was completed before his restoration to citizenship. See Rousseau, *The Confessions*, 329.

ⁱⁱⁱ *Second Discourse*, (SD), 116; 7.

First Amendment, everyone can say everything he damn well pleases. However, there were not always liberal societies. The proof in the case of Rousseau is very simple: when he published the *Social Contract* and the *Emile*,⁵ [these books were] condemned and burned both in Catholic France and in Calvinist Geneva. So there was no legal guarantee of freedom of speech, you know? That is, I believe, what you meant. Now, *en règle générale*, as Montesquieu would say, the general rule: one has always to consider the possibility that an author like Rousseau might keep something up his sleeve. Now here, let us apply this to the question of Geneva: is his praise of Geneva absolutely unqualified? I read to you a passage which is—since I use a different edition, but it is roughly on the second—no, it takes too long.^{iv} When he says here, “the Roman people itself, this model of all free peoples;” the Roman people itself. Now, let me see. I want to [inaudible word] this out. A little bit later, and still speaking of the Romans: “They acquired by degrees that severity of manners and that fierceness or pride of courage which made of them eventually the most respectable of all Peoples.”^v I believe one can say however much he praises Geneva, he never praises Geneva as highly as he praises Rome in this very dedication to the Republic of Geneva.

I have here in this thing another remark about Rome in the “Preface⁶ [to] *Narcisse*,” the preface to a comedy which Rousseau called *Narcisse*. “The foundation of Rome, which was founded by a troop of bandits—or gangsters—whose descendants became, in a few generations, the most virtuous people which has ever existed.”^{vi} He never says of the Genevans that they are *the* most virtuous people who ever existed. I leave this here. Good. So, in other words, there is perhaps a certain qualification to be considered. And that without considering what Rousseau said about republican Geneva when he attacked it in a later writing, the *Letters from the Mountain*, where he showed what a rather corrupt oligarchy was ruling in Geneva at the time.

There are also certain remarks critical of Rome here; you will easily find that. For example: “I would not have approved of Plebiscites similar to those of the Romans, where the Leaders of the State, or the Chiefs of the State, and those most interested in its conservation were excluded from deliberations on which the salvation of the state frequently depended, and where, by an absurd inconsistency, the Magistrates were deprived of rights which the simple citizen enjoyed.”^{vii} What he had in mind are the Roman institutions of *plebiscita* where only the *plebes* voted, and the decision of the *plebes* had the power of law. So, in other words, Rousseau did not swallow all Roman institutions. He is also critical of Rome, not only of Geneva. But what is his criticism of Geneva? Because after all, we are dealing now with Geneva; Rome will come up in other connections. Why is he critical of Geneva? There is something said here.

Student: Is it this next paragraph, where he talks about the fact that he wants the magistrates to introduce the laws rather than—?

LS: No. That, I do not believe is of any importance. In other words, the initiative in legislation should not rest with the simple citizens, but with experienced men. That is all. That is against Athens; against the more radical democracies of—

^{iv} Strauss is still using a French edition. Students are presumably still using the Cole.

^v *SD*, 113; 4-5.

^{vi} Jean-Jacques Rousseau, “Preface to Narcissus,” in Rousseau, 1992, 195.

^{vii} *SD*, 114; 5.

Student: The other point, I think, is where he makes a reference to [inaudible word] many horrible misunderstandings [that may] come to trouble the public concord.⁷ [He hopes] that these times⁸ [will be] bearable [inaudible words] etc. as though there had been prior to that time some misunderstandings.^{viii}

LS: No, let me put it on a specific and formalistic basis. Who is addressed?

Student: The whole citizen body is addressed.

LS: More precisely, “magnificent, most honored and sovereign lords.”^{ix} These are the magistrates of the republic.^x And it is quite interesting that he has to use the term “sovereign” here in a sense of which, of course, his whole doctrine would disapprove. Because only the citizen body, and not the magistrates, can be sovereign. But this was the official title of the writing. But he does not address them alone. This phrase, “*Magnifiques, Très Honorés, et Souverains Seigneurs*,”^{xi} occurs also [inaudible words]. Later on he turns to “my dear fellow citizens.”^{xii} Is there not also a passage where he addresses the ladies of Geneva?

Student: In the paragraph toward the end.

Student: “Amiable and virtuous daughters of Geneva.”^{xiii}

LS: In the second paragraph from the end?

Student: From the end of the dedication, third from the end.

LS: Yes, “aimables et vertueuses Citoyennes.” Citizens, too. But the magistrates come by far first, and then the male citizens, and then the female citizens. Is there another part of the population which he speaks about?

Student: Yes, I question that, because every time that he says this term, “magnificent, very honored and sovereign lords,” you find that the only time that he really addresses the magistrates, he omits one part of the phrase. He says, when he is addressing the magistrates and telling them how they are [inaudible words] of the people.^{xiv}

LS: Yes. “*Tels sont, Magnifiques et Très Honorés Seigneurs.*”

Student: He omits the “sovereign” every time he says it.

^{viii} See *SD*, 115; 6.

^{ix} *SD*, 111; 3.

^x As a student is about to point out, Strauss is mistaken.

^{xi} *SD*, 115, 121; 6, 11.

^{xii} *SD*, 115; 7.

^{xiii} *SD*, 119; 10.

^{xiv} *SD*, III, 117, 118; 8, 9.

LS: I have not checked it, but, very good. We cannot check it . . . no, you can never do a slipshod job; you have to go over the whole thing. It would be interesting if this phrase, sovereign, would occur only at the top and is omitted when he speaks.

Student: When I checked it, it seems that only when they are.

LS: Still, that is, however, a minor point. There is another group.

Student: The sublimes?

LS: Yes, the clergy. Now, what does he do with the clergy?

Student: He praises them for . . . even though they had sort of a peace of mind.

LS: Before we turn to the what, let us look at the how; does he address the clergy?

Student: He doesn't address them.

LS: Yes, that is interesting. He addresses the women, and he addresses the simple citizens, and of course the magistrates; but not the clergy. So that is interesting. He cannot talk to the clergy, somehow. He can talk about them.

Now, this passage [we] must read, because this is the answer to the question of what was wrong with Geneva and so good with Rome. I mean, to think that Rousseau did not know the grave shortcomings of Rome would do him a great injustice. These are colossal overstatements, the simple core of which is that . . . well, that we will see when we read this passage. Let us read the fourth paragraph from the end of the dedication.

Mr. Reinken:^{xv} "One must not be surprised if the Leaders of the Civil Society love the glory and the happiness of it; but it is too surprising that the rest of the men—" ^{xvi}

LS: "It is too much for the tranquility of men."

Mr. Reinken: "who regard themselves as the Magistrates, or rather as the masters, of a Fatherland more holy and more sublime—"

LS: So, you see: another fatherland, more saintly and more sublime than the other fatherland. That is the meaning. Yes?

Mr. Reinken: "there is some love for the terrestrial Fatherland which nourishes them. How sweet it is for me to be able to make an exception in our favor, such a rare exception—"

^{xv} While I have not identified him where we do not have the tapes to confirm, a Mr. Reinken appears to have been the regular reader for this seminar.

^{xvi} This student, like some others, is translating from the French. As with Strauss's translations, I will note questionable translations or instances in which the translator tries out multiple translations of the same word only when they seem significant.

LS: You see, he says, well, however bad the clergy everywhere else is, here in our wonderful Geneva, they are of course wonderful. But this is not so simple, as you will see from the sequel.

Mr. Reinken: “and put into the rank of our best Citizens these zealous depositors of the sacred doctrine, dogmas, authorized by the laws.”

LS: Here you have it: authorized by the *laws*. You know, not in their own right. So it is the citizen body or the magistrates of Geneva which made these dogmas respected. Yes.

Mr. Reinken: “These venerable Pastors of souls, whose lively and sweet eloquence carries so much better into the hearts the maxims of the Evangel, of the Gospel, [that]⁹ they always begin by practicing it themselves!”

LS: You see, the nasty implication is obvious. Yes.

Mr. Reinken: “Everybody knows with what success the great art of Preaching is cultivated in Geneva. But, too accustomed to see said by one manner and done by another, few People know just to what point the spirit of Christianity, the holiness of the morals, the severity for oneself, and the sweetness for another, reign in the hearts of our Ministers.”

LS: Meaning what you would expect would be severity for the others and self-indulgence for oneself. Go on.

Mr. Reinken: “Perhaps it belongs to the single City of Geneva to show the edifying example of such a perfect union between a Society of Theologians and of Lettered men; it is in large part [on] their recognized wisdom and moderation, it is on their zeal for the prosperity of the city, that I found the hope of its eternal tranquility; and I notice, with a pleasure mixed with surprise and respect—^{xvii}

LS: The surprise is of course interesting. He would not have expected it; that is clear. We leave it at that. Now, what does this mean, stated in the most simple terms? Why is Geneva inferior to Rome?

Student: Simply because they have this factor of contentment.

LS: Dualism of powers spiritual and temporal in Geneva; no such dualism in Rome. That this is Rousseau’s opinion is easily proved from his own work, especially from the *Social Contract*. So now we have made this clear.

But if we speak now of the other important point made already in the Dedication—first the distinction between natural equality and conventional inequality. I mean, this is a simple picture: by nature, all men are equal; and then wicked society establishes inequality, the nobility, the rich, and so on. But now Rousseau’s phrase in the first paragraph is, in Geneva the two are happily combined, natural equality and conventional inequality. But still that is nevertheless a deviation

^{xvii} SD, 119; 9-10.

from natural equality. Now, what is the precise phrase in the middle of the first paragraph, will you read it to us?

Mr. Reinken: “The profound wisdom¹⁰ [with] which the one and the other, happily combined in this State,¹¹ [contribute], in the manner most approaching natural law and most favorable to society, [to] the maintenance of a public order and to the happiness of the individuals—”^{xviii}

LS: Let us stop here. You see, in the manner You did not bring this out, Mr. Butterworth. What Geneva does *approximates* the natural law to the highest degree. It is not simply in agreement with the natural law. What he suggests, then, is this: natural law demands full equality. Natural law is in agreement with natural equality. But society is not possible on that basis. Society demands inequality. Therefore, no society can fully comply with natural law. It can at best approximate natural law. Do you see [inaudible] [goes to blackboard] Let us make a note of [inaudible]: natural law belongs to natural equality. Civil society cannot permit unqualified natural equality. Now, we see here the absolute necessity of having two concepts of virtue: one which is based on the recognition of natural equality and another which is incompatible with the unqualified equality. That is, of course, civic virtue, or patriotism. Civic virtue, or patriotism demands some qualification of natural equality, some tampering with natural equality. Is this clear?

Student: There is also the fact that in . . . since the kind of equality which exists in civil society cannot exist without the social contract

LS: We have not yet even come to that question. How do we get the civil society? That comes in through the social contract. But we come to that later.

Student: This is a society that we are speaking about here.

LS: Yes, it is officially a civil society. The question how it came about we postpone, because we have not yet the material for that. This much about the Dedication. Let us now turn to the Preface, which is much more substantial. Yes.

Student: I fail to understand how virtue came into this.

LS: Not at all. I mean, I brought it in. But my right to bring it in was based on our observations from last time, where we have seen three meanings of virtue. We have seen only the fact; we do not know how it is related to anything else. [To blackboard] Here, I said, we have this distinction; and this distinction lets us see the necessity of having a twofold meaning of virtue, one which means simply recognition of natural equality unqualified, and another one which is incompatible with the simple recognition of equality. What would be an example? In the state of Mississippi now, a man disapproving of the policy of the state of Mississippi would on the one hand behave to Meredith and anyone else in the situation in this way.^{xix} But on the other hand, he would conceivably also obey some laws made by the state of Mississippi incompatible with

^{xviii} SD, 111; 3. The student’s translation has been altered slightly for sense.

^{xix} Strauss refers to the controversy concerning James Meredith’s admission to the University of Mississippi, which resulted in riots in Autumn 1962, when this seminar was taught.

natural equality. It could happen, yes? These are two different virtues. Some people would say you must disregard that completely. But this is perhaps possible in the state of Mississippi for all I know—I have not been there—but it is not universally possible. Everyone must sometimes—assuming that this is the formula for virtue—deviate from it. Because there are always, in every state,¹² some forms of inequality, be it only¹³ the inequality of the traffic policeman and the man who has to take orders from him. But it will become clearer while we go.^{xx}

Now, let us turn to the Preface, and I think we should begin with—just read—the first paragraph. But before we turn to it, let us not forget the emphatic attack on science or knowledge made in the *First Discourse*. Rousseau seems to have forgotten it because he takes now science absolutely for granted. But this is not true. He has not forgotten it. Now, let us read that.

Mr. Reinken: “The most useful and the least advanced of all the human knowledges appears to me to be that of man; and I dare say that the inscription alone of the Temple of Delphi contained a Precept more important and more difficult than all the huge Books of the Moralists.”

LS: Do you remember what that inscription was?

Student: Man, know thyself.

LS: Yes. Self-knowledge is the most important knowledge. Go on.

Mr. Reinken: “Therefore I regard the subject of this Discourse as one of the most interesting questions that Philosophy might propose, and unfortunately for us, as one of the most thorny that Philosophers might resolve: for how can one know the source of inequality among men, if one does not begin by knowing them themselves? And how will man every come to the point of seeing them^{xxi} such as Nature formed them, across all of these changes that the succession of time and of things has produced in their original constitution—”

LS: “was compelled to produce.”^{xxii}

Mr. Reinken: “and to straighten out everything that he—”

LS: “and to disentangle what he holds.”

^{xx} It is unclear how Strauss means the virtue that recognizes natural equality and the virtue that is incompatible with recognizing natural inequality to map onto the three kinds of virtue he described in the first lecture (see 7-8). Those are moral/Christian virtue, republican or democratic virtue, and individualistic virtue, understood as strength of vigor of soul. Strauss seems to say here that republican virtue, which he has described as egalitarian earlier (13), is inegalitarian, at least to the extent that it can't fully recognize natural inequality. What's more, Strauss observes earlier on in this lecture that Rousseau recognized the existence of natural inequality (24). While it is perfectly consistent to claim that republics fully recognize neither natural inequality nor natural equality, it is not difficult to understand why the student who “fail[s] to understand how virtue came into this” is perplexed.

^{xxi} “himself” is correct here

^{xxii} This is an overtranslation. “Must have produced” is better.

Mr. Reinken: “from his proper basis from that which circumstances and his progresses have added [to] or changed in his primitive state?”

LS: Go a bit on.

Mr. Reinken: “Similar to the statue of Glaucus, that time, sea and storms have so disfigured that it resembles less a god than a ferocious beast—”^{xxiii}

LS: Yes, all right; the human soul and the changes it underwent are comparable to these changes which Glaucus underwent. Have you ever read that before, the story of Glaucus?

Student: The *Republic*, Book 9.

LS: A bit later: Book 10, in the middle of paragraph 611. So, there is a certain agreement between what Plato says and what Rousseau says: one must know the original nature of the soul, prior to all changes or corruptions it has undergone. To summarize this point, the most important kind of knowledge for man is self-knowledge of man; self-knowledge, because what else could be the basis of man’s knowledge of his duties if not knowledge of man, of his nature? But of his original nature, not of his nature as we find it now empirically, where it is affected by all kinds of terrible vices. This original nature—and this is explicitly referred to God at the end of this paragraph—this original nature of man is connected with equality: men are by nature equal. But it has been destroyed. By what? In the second paragraph or the third paragraph, Rousseau refers to *physical* causes which have destroyed it.^{xxiv} Natural equality has been destroyed not only by human wickedness but also by physical causes; therefore the appropriateness of the Platonic example: this god, whose figure, whose shape, was changed by the sea and the tempests. One thing is clear: we have to find out what is the nature of man, i.e. the original nature of man; and this is called here by Rousseau, in the next paragraph, the natural state of man, “*l’état naturel de l’Homme*”.^{xxv} The natural state of man is nothing else but the original human nature, but with special regard to the fact that in that original state all men were equal. Here Rousseau raises provisionally a question which will occupy him and us very much: did that original state ever exist? Rousseau does not know, but he asserts, whether it existed or not, it is absolutely necessary to know it. Why? Let us turn to the next paragraph and read that.

Mr. Reinken: “These investigations, so difficult to undertake, and of which one has so little thought until now, are however the only means which remain to us in order to raise a multitude of difficulties—”

LS: “to remove a multitude of difficulties.”

Mr. Reinken: “to remove a multitude of difficulties which cloak knowledge of the real foundations of human society.”

^{xxiii} SD, 122; 12.

^{xxiv} SD, 123; 12.

^{xxv} SD, 134; 20. Not the next paragraph but several paragraphs later, at the beginning of the First Part of the *Discourse*.

LS: Where to start? Forget about everything else; we want to understand human society. What are its real foundations? Answer: the nature of man.

Mr. Reinken: “It is this ignorance of the true definition—”

LS: Let me do it. “It is this ignorance of the Nature of man which throws so much incertitude and obscurity on the true definition of natural right—”

Natural right can¹⁴ be defined [only] on the basis of the knowledge of the nature of man.

“for the idea of right, says M. Burlamaqui, and still more that of natural right, are manifestly ideas relative to the Nature of man. Hence the first principles of this science have to be deduced from a knowledge of the nature of man.”^{xxvi}

But the difficulty is this: that somehow this foundation, the natural state of men, perhaps never existed. We keep this in mind.

But Rousseau turns now to another question to justify his investigation, because one could question all these things he has said, because someone could say, but we know what natural right is, or natural law is. We know; we have been taught at the universities. In the Protestant countries there were regular chairs for natural right at that time; not in England, but in Scotland, and surely in Germany and in the Scandinavian countries. All right, Rousseau says, now let us look at the state of this science. The sequel. Let me do it.

“It is not without surprise and without scandal that one observes the little agreement which rules regarding this important subject among the various Authors who have treated it. Among the gravest Writers, one finds barely two who agree on this point. Without speaking of the Ancient Philosophers, who seem to have had no other purpose but to contradict each other about the most fundamental principles, Roman Jurisconsults subject indifferently men and all other animals to the same natural Law, because they understand by this name rather the law which nature imposes¹⁵ [on] itself than the law which nature prescribes; or rather because of the particular meaning in which these Jurisconsults understand the word Law, they seem to have understood on this occasion by law nothing but the expression of general relations established by Nature among all animate beings¹⁶ for their common conservation, preservation. The Moderns, understanding by law only a rule prescribed to a moral being, i.e. to a being intelligent, free, and considered in its relation with other beings, limit as a consequence the meaning of natural law¹⁷ to the animal [alone] endowed with reason, i.e. man; but since they define it on such metaphysical foundations that there are, even among us, very few People able to understand these principles, let alone being able to find these principles by themselves.”^{xxvii}

Now, let us stop it here first. So, the ancient philosophers contradict themselves entirely. That is unsalutary. Then we have only one interesting alternative: the Roman lawyers and the modern ones. He does not say modern lawyers, or what; the modern ones. Now, what do the Roman lawyers say? The Roman lawyers say, the natural law is that which nature taught all animals:

^{xxvi} Strauss omits part of the passage.

^{xxvii} *SD*, 124-25; 13-14. Strauss omits part of the passage.

self-preservation, mating, and so on. But this is of no very great use, because this is done by all living beings naturally. No prescription [inaudible words]. That is not good; that is too general. The moderns do understand by natural law a prescriptive law, but a prescriptive law which is naturally addressed to that earthly being which alone can understand prescriptions, i.e. man. So Rousseau seems to be compelled to accept that, these modern notions of natural law. What does this mean, and, by the way, who are these moderns?

Mr. Butterworth: Pufendorf, Cumberland.^{xxviii}

LS: Yes, sure, but are they the only ones? Sure, 55 percent [inaudible], but the great men.

Mr. Butterworth: Wolff?^{xxix}

LS: Still the same league.

Student: Are you thinking of Hobbes?

LS: No, no. Thomas Aquinas. You see, “modern” has here a very wide sense. “Modern” means here anything not ancient. I can prove this to you from other writings. But at any rate, what he has here in mind is of course the provisional natural law teaching, where natural law is understood as prescriptive and prescribing actions to men; and basing that indeed on metaphysical principles. Only that Rousseau thinks metaphysical principles are obscure principles, that is his privilege. You know, when he says, “the establishment on sole metaphysical principles,”^{xxx} that is a pejorative term here; but not necessarily. Now, why does he object to that? Because they are based on metaphysical principles, they are unintelligible, he says; at least unintelligible to the large majority of men. Why must natural law be intelligible to every man?

Student: Because it is supposed to speak from the voice of nature.

LS: Because everyone is supposed to obey it. Yes. In other words, the traditional view means that the natural law speaks to every human being. And, Rousseau says, as transmitted, this kind of natural law does not speak to every human being, but speaks only, to quote a phrase of Locke, “to studiers of natural law,”^{xxxi} and therefore it cannot be universally. . . . Natural law must be duly promulgated; that is the traditional phrase. It cannot be duly promulgated if it requires a high development of reason. Now, how does he proceed? He says, one cannot obey this natural law without being a very great reasoner, and a profound metaphysician; and a natural law which is based on this premise is not good. In other words, civil society could never have been based on natural law because in that condition in which they entered civil society they could not possibly have been studiers of natural law, great reasoners, profound metaphysicians.

^{xxviii} Samuel Pufendorf (1632-1694), political philosopher, author of *Of the Law of Nature and of Nations* (1672); Richard Cumberland (1631-1718), philosopher, author of *Of the Laws of Nature* (1672).

^{xxix} Christian Wolff (1679-1754), philosopher, author of *The Law of Nations* (1749).

^{xxx} A paraphrase. “Sole metaphysical principles” may be “so metaphysical principles,” a literal translation of “*principes si métaphysiques*,” translated as “such metaphysical foundations” above.

^{xxxi} A “studier of that law” (*Second Treatise*, Chapter 2, S12)

Before we go on, what Rousseau implies is this, and this will be crucial for the understanding of what follows: Rousseau assumes somehow—and that will become clearer later on [inaudible word]—that men in early times, in pre-political times, were most imperfect intellectually; therefore they could not know the natural law. Differently stated, polemically stated, Rousseau says the traditional view of natural law presupposes perfect beginnings. In the theological version, it surely does: the Biblical teaching that man was created perfect. The implication: natural law is that law which must be knowable in the state of nature, prior to civil society. That is, as it were, the criterion. A natural law which is knowable within civil society, a law which is knowable *only* within civil society cannot be the natural law. Let us consider the next point. “Knowing so little the Nature of law^{xxxii}, and agreeing so badly about the meaning of the word law, it would be very difficult to agree on a good definition of natural Law. Hence all those definitions which one finds in the Books, apart from the fact that they disagree, have this added¹⁸ [fault] that they are based on various kinds of Knowledge which men do not have naturally.”^{xxxiii}

So, natural law must be based on natural knowledge, on knowledge which man possesses naturally. That was of course granted by the tradition. But the question is, what does it mean, a knowledge which man possesses naturally? Let us first try to recognize what he means in the seemingly abstruse remarks which follow. Traditional natural law presupposes that man has knowledge of “advantages of which they could not even conceive the idea except after having left the state of Nature,” except after having lived in society. “One begins by seeking rules on which it would be proper that men would agree among themselves for the common good; and then one gives the name of natural Law to the collection of these rules, without other proof except the good which one finds would result from the universal practice of these rules.”^{xxxiv}

What does he mean by that? One must really know a bit the previous discussions to understand that. That is very stenographic. Here I think he refers clearly to Hobbes, to the Hobbean notion of natural law. According to Hobbes, the natural law is a sum or collection of rules guiding us toward peace; for example, to be charitable, to be kind, to be grateful and other kinds of things. Rousseau says to Hobbes, how can men in the state of nature have any inkling of peace, if they have never lived in peace? They lived only in the state of nature, the war of everybody against everybody; how can they even think of another condition, let alone figure out what the universal conditions of peace would be? There is something implied in all these things which will gradually come to the fore; let us see what that is.

At the end of the next paragraph, “All we can see very clearly regarding this natural law, is that in order to be law, he whom it obliges must be able to submit to it with knowledge.” Very simple thing: natural law must be known to be natural law, otherwise it is not natural law; i.e. an unknown natural law cannot oblige men. In order to oblige men, it must be known. But Rousseau says this is not enough. It must fulfill also another condition: “In addition it is necessary so that it is natural, that is speaks immediately by the voice of Nature.”^{xxxv} If it does not speak immediately by the voice of nature, if it requires long chains of reasoning—as Hobbes’s in a way

^{xxxii} “Knowing Nature so little” is better.

^{xxxiii} *SD*, 125; 14.

^{xxxiv} *SD*, 125; 14.

^{xxxv} *SD*, 125; 14.

does—then it is not natural law. How can these poor fellows in the forest develop long chains of reasoning? You see how much Rousseau's whole argument is based on a certain notion of the state of nature as undeveloped reason. He takes this somehow for granted. But on this basis, the argument has a great sense to it.

All right, let us grant him his point: somehow we need natural law, but hitherto there does not exist a true teaching regarding natural law. What exists now is absolutely imperfect, and chiefly for this reason, the latter point: because traditional plus Hobbean natural law presupposes a development of reason in the pre-political state which is absolutely impossible. Natural law must speak with the voice of nature, without the help of reason. Now, what is the conclusion? The next paragraph. So that I have time to catch my breath, will you read that?

Mr. Reinken: "Leaving aside then all the scientific books which only teach us to see men such as they have made themselves, and meditating on the first and most simple operations of the human Soul, I believe that you^{xxxvi} notice there two principles anterior to reason, of which one interests us ardently for our own well-being and for the conservation of ourselves, and the other inspires in us a natural repugnance to see any sensible Being perish or suffer, and principally our similars. It is from the convergence, or the concourse, and from the combination that our mind is in a state to make of these two Principles, without it being necessary to have that principle of sociability to enter into it, all the rules of natural right seem to me to derive¹⁹; rules which reason is subsequently forced to re-establish on other foundations, when, by successive developments—"

LS: "by *its* successive developments."

Mr. Reinken: "by its successive developments, it has arrived at strangling Nature."^{xxxvii}

LS: "To extinguish nature."^{xxxviii} Good. Now, let us see. We must base natural law on the voice of nature. What does this mean? Rousseau says here [that] by meditating on the first and most simple operations of the human soul, we find out these things which must have been actual in men at any time and under any conditions. Reasoning in any highly developed sense [was] out of the question; but certain things [human beings] have always had. For example, speaking commonsensically, men have always had sense perceptions of trees, of dogs, or whatever was around.²⁰ This we can safely assume. This is an operation of the soul, sense perception.

Now, Rousseau says he finds two principles. One is self-preservation: however stupid and undeveloped man has been, he always wanted to preserve himself; and this is loosely intelligible. The other one is extremely strange and will keep us alert for the rest of the course; the other is compassion. Men have simultaneously from the beginning self-preservation and compassion with other living beings, but chiefly with his likes, chiefly with men, that is to say. Now, this is not quite as sentimental as it may sound, although it will prove to be very sentimental. The non-sentimental basis comes to sight if you think of the following fact: I think even the most extreme behaviorist would still today admit that to assume that there is something in men related not only

^{xxxvi} "I" is correct.

^{xxxvii} *SD*, 125-26; 14-15.

^{xxxviii} This correction seems unwarranted.

to his own preservation, but to the preservation of the species is not altogether surprising. I mean, after all, horses do not live on horsemeat, lions not on lion's meat and so on. Why should it not be so arranged that man has a certain abhorrence against senselessly killing men? That some people, some individuals do have such desires could be traced to bad social habitudes, bad education. That is possible. Let us grant for the moment that compassion is Rousseau's substitute for men's natural inclination toward the preservation of the species; but that doesn't dispose of the difficulty. Why not? This is a very far-fetched phenomenon which I have in mind. What would simple men say? What is the natural provision for the preservation of the species? Compassion?

Student: No, it would be more interest in the opposite sex.

LS: More what?

Student: Eros.

LS: Procreation, sure. Rousseau is here silent about that; that is very interesting. But why does he neglect this very well-known fact? He gives the reason here; we don't have to speculate when we have the material.

Student: He comes to it later, but I don't see that it is here.

LS: Here, sure. He says explicitly he wishes to avoid any natural sociability. Now, if man has a natural desire to unite with another human being for the purpose of procreation—and that would somehow involve also the children—if this is, say, as important for human constitution as self-preservation, then man is in a way a social animal. In a very rudimentary way, but there is something social about that. That, he wishes to avoid; and therefore this compassion is somehow . . . you know, you don't kill the next fellow for the fun of it, but you remain as asocial as you were before. This is the interesting thing. Now, why does he do this?

Student: Isn't it also important there that there are two different intensities? One is an ardent interest for our well-being and the other is just simply repugnance.

LS: Very good. That is very sound. In other words, in case of a conflict, which has the right of way? Me. Same in Locke, of course: if self-preservation does not come into competition, you will not kill the other fellow. *If*. Yes, that is clear. That is true. Self-preservation is written very big, and compassion is written much more delicately; there is no question. Yes.

Student: If these two principles amount generally to natural law, then would the natural law bind all animals who have these two principles?

LS: No, because natural law proper requires reason. You see, he says, "after compassion has lost its power"^{xxxix}; it loses its power with society—that we will see later—because once society emerges, competition becomes terribly important. And competition is incompatible, at least in its more interesting forms, with compassion. And then the voice of nature is stifled by competition.

^{xxxix} This appears to be a paraphrase.

And then it is necessary—because the competitors would act like beasts against one another—²¹ to restore natural law on a rational foundation, because now instinct has lost its power. But since reason is of course not affected in brutes—I mean lions are under no moral obligation not to kill men. One could say there is perhaps a moral obligation on men not to kill even lions and tigers just indiscriminately.

Student: But if society did not destroy compassion in the beasts, then wouldn't compassion be there

LS: The brutes cannot have society of that particular kind. There we have to wait for Rousseau's analysis.

Student: But then they would not have competition, would they, and therefore they wouldn't need reason to import to

LS: Yes, it would simply be impossible; it would be impossible because they are incapable of reasoning. Now, I would like first to take one step back to make intelligible what Rousseau says. Surely Rousseau opposes traditional natural law, say that Thomistic natural law which was maintained in modifications still at the Protestant universities. I mean, the names which Mr. Butterworth mentioned, like Pufendorf and Wolff, these were people who in a modified way—modified by Hobbes in some way or the other—transmitted still the old teaching. But Hobbes is of course the most important man in this connection. Now Hobbes, too, discovered, by meditations on the first motions of the soul, two principles most relevant to natural law. Which were they?

Student: Vanity and fear.

LS: Yes. [LS goes to the blackboard] Let us call it here, “self-preservation” and “pride,” as he calls it. Now pride covers a very large range of phenomena: vanity, competition, trying to be superior to others, and to be recognized as superior to others, and so on. So, that is viciousness, according to Hobbes. Therefore a very bad state of nature; because self-preservation, which is not necessarily vicious, but which is also not exactly charitable—it means me first—is enforced by pride. And of course the state of nature is most miserable. Rousseau's thesis is [that] self-preservation remains, but pride is replaced by compassion. Man is good by nature. We will see how much this has to be qualified to correspond to what Rousseau truly meant; but schematically that is correct. So there is no evil in men; because after all, there is nothing evil if you say among two starving men, one wants this last piece of—what is it, what they eat? Horsemeat, probably, not steak—that I want to have. It is not exactly vicious. But in addition, compassion takes away much from the harshness which self-preservation has. That is a great modification. Whether this is a tenable assertion remains to be seen. But let us consider another point in the next paragraph. In the next paragraph, Rousseau makes perfectly clear that the foundations must be pre-rational.

[END OF TAPE SIDE 1]

[Tape resumes] **LS:** —the sensibility: man not as a rational being, but as a sensible being—not in the English sense of the word, but sensitive.

Now, I add a few more points and then bring up the key point which I have always presupposed hitherto. The basis of the meditation is the reflection on the most simple operations of the soul. This leads us to the *Emile*, the *Emile* being a book devoted to education of children, the infantile mind, the most simple operations of the human soul—let us keep it at that. And we see from the paragraph after the next that this will be a genetic study. Not only the *Emile*, but also, in a different way, the *Discourse on the Origin of Inequality* is a genetic study. In a very simple way, the *Emile* describes the genesis of reason in an individual, and the *Discourse* describes the genesis of reason in the human race.

Now, first I must bring in this more general consideration with which some of you will be quite familiar, because I have to mention it in almost every course. The premise of the whole thing—and this comes out very clearly later on—if you turn to the fifth paragraph of the *Discourse* proper,²² prior to the First Part, you will see the sentence, “The Philosophers who have examined the foundations of society have all felt the necessity to return to the state of Nature, but not one of them has arrived.”^{xl} So, all political philosophy, according to Rousseau, is based on an understanding of the state of nature; and that, all political philosophers tried to do^{xli}; none of them arrived at that. Now, what about that proposition as a historical assertion?

Student: I think it is true of Aristotle.

LS: Yes, sure; unless you understand the state of nature in a special sense. What does the term “state of nature” mean? There is no direct Greek equivalent of that, but in Latin it is very common: *status naturales*. What does it mean? I mean, if Aristotle would have spoken Latin, he would have called the state of nature “the state of the complete development,” and the very phrase which Rousseau uses as motto, taken from the *Politics*, has of course this meaning. Since Aristotle was a very empirical man, he had of course in mind very empirical things. Now, if you look at a puppy, newly born, and after a few months, and so following that way, you see a growth curve, [blackboard] roughly of this kind—I mean, if he is not killed prematurely. He grows, reaches a certain state of maturity, and then he goes down, he decays. This is the peak, in Greek *akme*. That is the perfection of the dog; then he can do everything which a dog is capable of doing. Compare the barking of a very young puppy with the barking of a mature dog, and you see: the little dog, the puppy is not yet a real dog. The same is true of all other beings, other living beings; it is even true also of man. But in man the thing is complicated by the fact that man has two peaks, a bodily peak and a mental peak. You know, a man has his bodily peak perhaps very early; his mental peak he will have somewhat later, maybe many years later. This makes it more complicated; and that has to do [with the fact] that man is a strange animal compared with the others. Good. So, we have [that] the state of nature is the state of perfection. And of course the fact that man is bodily perfect—you know, that he could become a marine sergeant—does not yet give him all human perfection. So therefore the full human perfection is naturally very rare. But the state of nature was not used by philosophers to speak of; very rarely, occasionally. The term stems, according to my knowledge hitherto, from Christian theology, and we have to turn there to understand that. I see we have here a priest who knows these things much better than I do, but I will first state what I have understood, and if it is wrong, you correct me. Good.

^{xl} *SD*, 132; 18.

^{xli} That is, to understand the state of nature.

The Christian teaching as I understood it makes a distinction between the state of nature and the state of grace—I omit some complications—and the state of nature is subdivided into the state of pure nature and the state of corrupt nature. Now, when you read, for example in Fleury^{xlii}—a famous author of the early seventeenth century—that people in the state of nature do this and this, he does not of course mean the savages in the woods. He means non-Christians, of course, in civil society. That is the state of nature, and in this particular case even of corrupt nature, but that is not to do

So, the state of nature has this very simple meaning. The subdivision is crucial: pure nature, as man was created; and corrupt nature. But “pure nature”²³ [has] a certain difficulty to which Rousseau later on refers—he knew the rudiments of Christian theology, you can be sure of that—that man never was actually in the state of pure nature, because when he was created he had also from the beginning graces higher than natural graces, so that Adam never lived in the state of nature proper; but after the Fall he lived in the state of corrupt nature. Therefore Rousseau is so doubtful whether man ever lived in the state of pure nature. Not that he believes the Christian dogma, but he knew these things. Now, then Hobbes came; and Hobbes I believe was the first man to introduce the term state of nature into rational political philosophy proper. Hobbes spoke of the state of nature. He still apologizes for that, at least in the *De Cive*. In the preface I believe he says, “this state of men which it may be permitted to call nature.”^{xliii} That was not yet usual at that time. How did he call the alternative to the state of nature? The state of civil society.

Now if you compare these two schemes, I think what happened becomes perfectly clear: Hobbes abolishes the distinction between pure nature and corrupt nature, at least in his political philosophy. Hence, I would say, there is no need whatever for redemption, for grace. There is no corruption in the state of nature but only, to use John Locke’s phrase, inconveniences of the state of nature^{xliv}; and these inconveniences are taken care of by simple human government. Good. So, Hobbes’s teaching of the state of nature is characterized by this fact which I mentioned before: in the state of nature man is No, first, the state of nature is pre-social. Everyone is controlled by his desire for self-preservation and by his desire to lord it over others, pride; no natural sociality. Sociality comes in through the contract, through the social contract, which establishes society and therewith government. And this contract presupposes that men reason and figure out that it is an absurd condition to lie each one in a foxhole and to have enemies not only there, but everywhere: each one lying in his foxhole, being the enemy of everyone else—most unpleasant condition. Reason dictates to leave that state, and reason also tells men what they have to do in order to do it safely. That is the natural law in Hobbes’s sense.

So here we have a man who is pre-social, but rational; that was the Hobbean teaching. And then Rousseau says as it were to Hobbes, “Look: what you say is absurd, because if man is truly pre-social, he *must* be pre-rational; because reasoning, speech, this *is* man’s sociality.” It is therefore

^{xlii} This *could* be the Claude Fleury (1640-1725), and educational theorist known to Rousseau, but then Strauss’s “early seventeenth century” would be off.

^{xliii} Hobbes, *On the Citizen*, ed. Richard Tuck and Michael Silverthorne (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998), 11-12.

^{xliv} *Second Treatise*, Chapter 2, S 13.

necessary *on* the Hobbean basis to abandon Hobbes and to go over to the view that man is by nature not only pre-social but also pre-rational. That is Rousseau's beginning, and here I must admit, given the Hobbean premises, Rousseau is right. That was prepared already to some extent by Montesquieu, but Rousseau surely drew the conclusion. Whether Hobbes by his inconsistency did not preserve something which Rousseau through his consistency abandons—in other words, whether the Hobbean position as a whole is not more reasonable than Rousseau's position as a whole—is a different matter. But strictly, since we, I think, must insist on some logicity, one must admit that Rousseau in this respect argues well.

Student: Isn't that resting on the premise, though, that neither reason nor speech is natural to man, which even Rousseau admits that he can't really demonstrate?

LS: Hobbes still takes for granted the Aristotelian definition, man is a rational animal. But one can say Hobbes changes this: he says, "Aristotle, you are right, man is a rational animal; but you are wrong in saying man is a social animal." He says so. The clearest statement is in the first chapter of the *Citizen*. The trouble with students' knowledge of Hobbes is that they mostly read certain chapters of the *Leviathan*. But regarding the fundamental things, [one should read] the *De Cive*, which is available in an English translation made under Hobbes' supervision—or perhaps even by Hobbes himself, I do not remember exactly.^{xlv24} [It] is of course not so gracefully and powerfully written as the *Leviathan*, but one could read it in a pinch. The first chapter of²⁵—I think everyone can read it at least once in ten or fifteen minutes—is²⁶ very revealing²⁷. In a footnote to the second paragraph in the first chapter of *De Cive*, Hobbes takes [issue explicitly]²⁸ with the Aristotelian definition of man as a social animal.^{xlvi} So, to repeat: Aristotle says man is a rational animal and *therefore* a social animal; Hobbes says man is a rational animal, but not a social animal; and Rousseau takes the last step and says, since he is not a social animal, he is also not a rational animal. He will say it here, later on, next time. Who reads the paper? Mr. Hartman? You will find the passage. Whether that is consistently possible, that is still another matter. We are not yet so far along. Mr. Seltzer.

Mr. Seltzer: I have been trying to figure out how some of these considerations are related to the Hobbean rejection of teleology, and the so-called epistemology of knowledge based on human construction.

LS: Well, we will have to take that up sooner or later. But let us for the time being only make as it were [inaudible] some holes with wax in them, so that we can always remember them and take these up.

One point I must still mention, and that has something to do with the question which you raised. Such questions as what is the nature of man, what are the characteristics of man, what are the properties of man,²⁹ are raised throughout the tradition, naturally, from its very beginning, and were still raised in Rousseau's and Hobbes's times, of course. But a great change took place in this respect. For example, in the tradition, they made a distinction between the essence of man

^{xlv} When the course was given, the consensus was that Hobbes had done the translation, but it is now thought that Hobbes did not even authorize the translation. See Noel Malcolm, "Charles Cotton: Translator of Hobbes's *De Cive*" in his *Aspects of Hobbes* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2004).

^{xlvi} Hobbes, 1998, 24-25.

and properties of man. The essence of man is rationality, but the property of man is, for example, that he is the animal *risibile*, the animal which can laugh. Because whatever dog-lovers may tell you, don't believe them when they say dogs laugh; they can look as if they laugh, but they don't laugh. So, it is a property of man. Now, in a loose way of speaking, you can say all things,³⁰ [including] the essence of man, [are properties]³¹, and forget about these subtle distinctions. I will read to you a passage from Hobbes which is in a way an answer to your question. "By philosophy is understood the knowledge acquired by reasoning from the manner of the generation of anything to the properties, [or from the properties]^{xlvi} to some possible way of generation of the same, to the end to be able to produce, as far as matter and human force permit, such effects as human life requires."^{xlvi}

So philosophy, or science, is knowledge of—has to do with—the properties of things, and in particular of man. But this is here modified: not simply the properties. By the way, in the Latin translation of this text which Hobbes published some [inaudible word] years later, he replaces the word "properties" by "effects." That is very interesting. The properties are to be understood as effects. What does this mean? We have the property, say, laughing: man is the animal which can laugh. You know that. Or to take the famous example which I almost forgot, Molière's *Imaginary Sick Man*, *Malade Imaginaire*, where he ridicules scholasticism and Aristotle by—how does he say?—opium: why does opium have this effect of making men sleep? Answer: opium possesses a *vis dormitiva*, a power of making men sleep. And terrific laughter, up to the present day. But is it so silly as people say? I mean, when you are concerned with using opium—a physician or someone else—what is really the key point? The fact that opium has this power to make sleep. The mere chemical formula of opium, the mere generation or genesis of opium, is of no interest. The interesting thing is that this genesis leads to this result, to the *virtus dormitiva*. And the really enlightening thing is the property, not the genesis of the property, although in a secondary way, if you want to have certain things with properties, you might be interested in knowing how you can produce³² [them]. The question, for example, of how you can make a man laugh, how to produce laughter, is thoroughly important for these comics on TV and perhaps also for people who have to make after-dinner speeches, and other men. But these latter, of course, are not concerned with what produces the possibility of laughter, but only [with] what kind of thing can produce laughing under certain conditions. I mean, why is man the only earthly rational being; essentially the only laughing and weeping earthly being? This is of course, one can say, the metaphysical and interesting question; the secondary, not unimportant but definitely secondary, question of how you can make people laugh—do you see the point? The key point is this: on the basis of Hobbes—and some other men, of course: Galileo, Descartes, and the others, but Hobbes has a particularly neat formula—the question of the property of a thing is replaced by the question of the genesis of that property. What is laughter means how does laughter come about; what is the state, how does the state come about; and so on. The question of [the] property is replaced by the question of the genesis. The most important subject, of course, is man is a rational animal.

The question which we have to solve on that basis is the *genesis* of rationality, and this is, to repeat, a twofold question. The first question: how does a human baby—a new-born baby, which in no sense can be said to be an actually rational being—how does it become rational? Here is

^{xlvi} Added for sense (it is a part of the passage Strauss or the transcriber omitted).

^{xlvi} Hobbes, 1994, Chapter 46, para. 1, 453-54.

the point. Let me first—remind me of that baby. The genesis of rationality [can be considered] on two levels: in the individual—let us turn to the *Emile*, but of course already Locke's *Essay Concerning Human Understanding* was such an attempt to show the genesis of reasoning out of the mere primary sense data which every baby of course has already, and the second is the genesis—how did the rational animal, how did the *species* of rational animals emerge; and how did it change in order to become perfectly rational, so to speak? Very briefly, the one is psychology, in the primary modern sense, and the other is philosophy of history. Philosophy of history tries to follow the fate of the human species as a species able to develop reason, and how it came that he developed reason—and how he developed reason. That is surely what Rousseau's philosophy of history means. Rousseau doesn't use the word philosophy of history here, but he clearly has this in mind, because he says at the end, shortly before the beginning of the first part: "Here is your history, man."^{xlix} Of course, not the history of any individual—then he would have to speak of babies and children—but of the human species. Let us never forget that.

Now, as to the other point: Aristotle, or any [of a] certain kind of thinker, or any commonsensical man would say, of course, in a way, a baby is a rational animal, potentially. A simple man would not know this word potentially, but he would say, well, it will become a rational animal, and we don't have to use any tools to blow reason into it. It is somehow germinally in it; potentially. This is one crucial point. The distinction between potentiality and actuality loses its significance in connection with this new development. There is no longer potentiality proper. You have a certain being, a new-born baby, which has these and these characteristics, actual characteristics; for example, he is two-legged already and so on. Good. Out of this actuality you have to understand grown-up men, not in the way that there is a tendency towards that, but that it is somehow by influences already actually here, pushed there. Do you see the difference? It is of course not feasible in any practice, but the tendency is there. There is no orderedness of the baby toward the grown-up man; hence it is absurd to say³³ [that] to be a baby or to be a child means [only] to be prepared for adulthood. It is as perfect, as a baby, as a grown-up man is as a grown man. "The century of the child," someone said in our century.¹ Now the age of infancy or of childhood is as perfect and as self-contained as any other age. What Rousseau will do in the *Emile* follows from that. That is what it means; what teleology or the primacy of property compared with generation means. That is a provisional answer to your question.

There is one more point which we have to consider very briefly, namely the beginning of the *Discourse* proper. Here in this section on these three pages, Rousseau makes it perfectly clear, as Mr. Butterworth has brought out, that there is of course natural inequality—natural *inequality*—and political or social inequality. What Rousseau says is only this—and that is of course of very great importance: there is no essential connection between the two kinds of inequality; meaning, if you were to assume that when you come to any society or any institution, that the men who are at the top are invariably the best men, you will make very great blunders. I think that one must be very simple-minded to believe that, for example, say, as some comedian put it, that the best men in society are the senior executives of the biggest corporations, the members of Congress, [inaudible word] judges, and [that] the worst people are invariably those in prison. That is not so simple. There can be people perhaps even in prison who can be better than men who are distinguished by social position. I hope that this does not create any great It is a practical

^{xlix} SD, 133; 19.

¹ Ellen Key, Swedish writer, author of *The Century of the Child* (1900).

difficulty, but theoretically it is very obvious. Now, when Rousseau says there is no connection, in a way it is common sense, but there is something more than that. The classical view was that there should be—the social inequality, the social hierarchy should correspond to the natural hierarchy. Rousseau as it were gives up every hope of that and tries to find the solution of the social problem without that hope. Then of course the egalitarian solution is the only one which is possible as an alternative. If there is no ghost of a chance that the men of virtue will rule, then egalitarianism is the fairest thing. This I mention in passing.

Student: Isn't the egalitarian regime something like the mixed regime?

LS: Yes. I am sorry, I must mention only one point, and that is this very famous passage where Rousseau says, "Let us then begin by disregarding all the facts"^{li} for which he has been said—"look what an ideologist; he throws out all the facts." The mere rational construction, then of course the irrational construction . . . That is, of course, not what he means. What does he have in mind? I think you spoke of it, Mr. Butterworth. How do you understand that passage?

Mr. Butterworth: I see this as being his attempt to stay away from getting himself in trouble with Biblical religion.

LS: Yes, exactly. The facts he has in mind are the Biblical facts, no others; and therefore he presents his construction, his presentation, in the book as hypothetical, because he does not wish to contradict the Biblical teaching. But this is I am sure merely a polemical move. He says at the end of this paragraph: "Since my subject is of concern to men in general, I will attempt to use a language which agrees to all Nations"—and he means of course nations Christian or non-Christian—"or rather, forgetting the times and the Places in order to think only of the Men to whom I speak, I will imagine myself in the Lyceum of Athens; repeating the Lessons of my Masters, having the Platos and Xenocrates for my judges, and the human Race as auditor."^{lii} In other words, he wants to put it on a strictly natural basis, on the basis free from the acceptance of revelation. I believe there can be no doubt about it, but this would require a somewhat more detailed discussion.

How, then, can we summarize? Yes, this point we must state—unfortunately we don't have time any more today. And this concerns exactly this question: why is philosophy of history—because this is a philosophy of history that we read in the *Second Discourse*—why is this necessary for natural law or natural right as Rousseau understands it? The traditional natural law teaching had nothing to do directly with any philosophy of history. At least since Rousseau, it is necessarily connected with that. That we must try to understand. I gave an indication before: the traditional natural law teaching presupposed that man has a perfect beginning; Hobbes, Rousseau and the others—Locke, too, of course—deny that man has a perfect beginning, and this is of some consequence regarding the content or the substance of natural law. That is a long story, but fortunately we have some time for its study. Here I must only assert it; but perhaps I can make it a bit more specific if one of you wants to help me by raising a question which will set me going.

^{li} SD, 132; 19.

^{lii} SD, 133; 19.

The subject which I have in mind is generally discussed under this heading: that the state of nature of which so much was spoken in the seventeenth and eighteenth³⁴ [centuries] was understood to be a purely hypothetical concept, i.e. it had nothing to do with any place in history or with the historical process as a whole, nothing. [It was] a pure construction, meaning this: the state of nature is a state which never was actual, but [is] construed theoretically as a state in which man had only natural rights and duties, and not yet any positive rights or duties; only rights and duties stemming from natural law, and none stemming from positive law.

Now, there is some basis for that. For example, Pufendorf does this explicitly; and one can also take this passage in Rousseau as presenting this point of view. But I do not believe that this is tenable. That some people present it as tenable, there is no question, but I do not believe it goes to the root of the difficulties. It has to do with this question: the natural law is supposed to be obligatory on all men, i.e. to be duly promulgated, and that means that men are sufficiently rational from the very beginning. It is therefore connected with the question of the conditions in which man lives and especially the question of the beginning. The Biblical view is perfect beginnings; the Plato-Aristotelian view can be stated [as] imperfect beginnings, and generally speaking the philosophic view was imperfect beginnings, although there was a certain variation.

Some people described the imperfect beginning as terribly beastly—Hobbean style—and others said, no, gentle, but not very intelligent. I think there was always [an] empirical basis from the primitive and savage people known: some were beastly and some were gentle. I don't think this is an issue completely irrelevant to the question of natural law, as can be seen from this most general consideration which I can now only indicate. A full development of any concept of natural law requires reflection on the connection between the nature of man, surely, first of all on the nature of man—that is universally admitted—but also on the connection between the nature of man and the whole within which man lives. Now, in this area where the connection between the nature of man and the whole is discussed, these kind of reflections, a specimen of which is presented by Rousseau in his *Second Discourse*, enter. One could perhaps say philosophy or history in this sense is a modified form of the reflection on the connection between the nature of man and of the whole, but this needs indeed a long elaboration, and without some assistance or incentive coming from the class I will not continue that now. Yes.

Student: I don't know if this is to your point, but the question I had was,³⁵ [don't] Plato and other Greek thinkers speak of an age of gold, of a golden age, an earlier age than . . .

LS: Yes, Plato speaks of that. This was a notion developed in popular thought by poets, to some extent; but I think one can show that Plato did not accept that. I mean, the least modification which he makes is that no development of the sciences existed in that golden age. Plato has a number of passages which seem to present a kind of beginning not yet a tough beginning, but that does not yet mean a perfect beginning; imperfect it always is in Plato. Yes.

Mr. McAtee : The notion of a philosophy of history has a pre-rational condition.

LS: What does that mean?

Mr. McAtee: Well, the pre-rational beginnings of society—and then they speak of the philosophy of history, meaning a philosophy which is concerned with history, which is concerned with something which cannot be articulated as philosophy. In other words, there is something present there.

LS: That is very vague. Let us put it this way: the term “philosophy of history” is today common and used therefore in extremely vague senses, and Mr. McAtee is by no means the only one guilty of that. But if he had been more precise: the term “philosophy of history” to the best of my knowledge was coined by Voltaire at about the time when Rousseau wrote these things, and Voltaire meant something relatively³⁶ [simple] by it, namely a philosophic reading of history books; you know, not merely being impressed by big spectacles of great varieties and other explosions, but a thinking study of what has happened. So, that was a very humble thing. There is no philosophy of history in classical antiquity, nor in the Middle Ages. People who have become accustomed to the thought of the concept of philosophy of history can say there is always the city of God in the philosophy of history, but this is a very improper use of the word—colloquially tolerable, but not exact. This emerged only in the modern centuries and perhaps one can say it started with Vico^{liii} [inaudible], but surely the term is post-Vicoan.

How shall I state it as simply as possible? Perhaps in this way, starting off from classical thought: man and the perfection of man; and there is nothing arbitrary about that, what the perfection of man is. Now, can all men reach the perfection of man, the highest perfection? The classical answer was “no.” But the more interesting question then is, can men reach the perfection, even those who are by nature capable of reaching it, everywhere? Answer: no. If people lead such a life like, say, the Eskimos in the north, and the people in central Africa under particularly hot conditions, the chances are much [inaudible]. Moderate climate is important, and, of course, the Mediterranean area was regarded as one of a particularly moderate climate. But it is quite interesting that for the classics the local varieties were much more interesting than the temporal varieties. When Aristotle speaks of natural right, for example, he says he means what is right *everywhere*; he does not say at all times, because he is more interested in the local varieties than the temporal varieties. Could you imagine why? The thought seems to be familiar to you. Nothing far-fetched. Local variety is observable by everyone who tries; temporal variety, you have to rely on reports. We are so bookish; we take knowledge taken from books so much for granted that this difference is no longer so important for us as it was in Athens.

But of course they knew also of temporal varieties: Aristotle—and not only he—assumed that there are cataclysms, natural catastrophes, from time to time which destroy all civilization—say kinds of floods, like the Biblical floods, which destroy practically all civilization, and only a few remnants remain. And this takes place infinitely often, since the universe is supposed to be eternal. Then there is only a relative beginning, because every beginning is preceded by some completion. In these early stages—after the floods, let us say, or whatever that was—in these beginnings, there cannot be perfection. Some time must have passed until men had settled again, led a settled life, ceased to be nomads, and had cities of some kind or other. Only then could the higher life of men develop again.

^{liii} Giambattista Vico (1668-1744), philosopher and author of *The New Science* (1725).

[The same idea of a relative beginning is present]^{liv} if you take the alternatives of the classical view *in* the classical view—say, for example the Democritean view, according to which the whole visible universe is temporary, has come into being [and] will perish again—but then it is understood there will be a new universe. You know, you have as it were what we call universe; [LS writes on the blackboard] and then a destruction of the universe and a new universe *in infinitum*. Here there is a new beginning of the whole human race in each case, but of course again an imperfect beginning. In all cases, both in the Aristotelian version and in the Democritean version, to take the clearest cases, what they now would call the historical process is an infinitely repeated process which has very roughly also the character of the development of the individual—in a very rough sense—ascend, peak, decay.

Now, the entirely different view is the Biblical view. In the Biblical view there is a perfect beginning and in addition—that is crucial—a unique process, one and only one process, leading from Adam to final judgment day, happening once and never again. The modern philosophies of history, whether they are believing or unbelieving, always take for granted the absolute unicity of the process. There is only one. There are some relics of classical thought which from time to time reappear; for example in Spengler to some extent, you know, each culture develops by itself, and so forth; but this is not characteristic of modern thought in general. Now, in Rousseau there is clearly meant such a unique process. This, I would say, is by no means a sufficient, but a necessary condition of the philosophies of history and explains also why there cannot be philosophies of history in classical times: the uniqueness of the process. Whether this is theoretically well-founded in those doctrines which are not based on the Bible is another matter. I cannot go beyond now, and in addition I think we have already . . . Mr. Butterworth?

Mr. Butterworth: May I ask one question?

LS: Yes.

Mr. Butterworth: Last time when you were speaking of the *First Discourse*, you mentioned that Rousseau's attack on science is based on a bigger science, so to speak, on a larger science. He attacks science from the point of view of this. . . .

LS: Yes, that is true enough, but—will you remind me of that?

END OF LECTURE

¹ Deleted "possible."

² Deleted "is."

³ Deleted "their."

⁴ Moved "is."

⁵ Deleted "this book was."

^{liv} Added for sense.

⁶ Deleted “de.”

⁷ Deleted “I hope.”

⁸ Deleted “are.”

⁹ Deleted “because.”

¹⁰ Deleted “of.”

¹¹ Deleted “concur.”

¹² Deleted “there are.”

¹³ Deleted “of.”

¹⁴ Moved “only.”

¹⁵ Deleted “to.”

¹⁶ Deleted “and.”

¹⁷ Moved “alone.”

¹⁸ Deleted “one” for sense.

¹⁹ Deleted “from that” for sense.

²⁰ Changed from “but certain things, for example, speaking common-sensically, men have always had sense perceptions for trees, of dogs, or whatever was around.”

²¹ Deleted “then it becomes necessary.”

²² Deleted “I mean.”

²³ Deleted “is.”

²⁴ Deleted “but which.”

²⁵ Deleted “the *De Cive*.”

²⁶ Deleted “a.”

²⁷ Changed from “a very revealing chapter.”

²⁸ Changed from “explicitly issue.”

²⁹ Deleted “they.”

³⁰ Deleted “also.”

³¹ Changed from “also the essence of man, that is a property.”

³² Deleted “it.”

³³ Deleted “this is only.”

³⁴ Deleted “century.”

³⁵ Deleted “doesn’t.”

³⁶ Deleted “simply.”

Session 3

[In progress] **Leo Strauss:** I will say a few things about these peculiar difficulties. One difficulty is created by the fact that Rousseau presented his thesis as an answer to the question regarding equality. This subject of equality or inequality is in a way much less important for the book as a whole than the title would warrant. Chiefly the point is—and Rousseau stated it very simply later on in the *Social Contract*ⁱ, as he stated it here too, but here not without contradiction—men are of course by nature unequal; and the purpose of civil society is precisely to substitute conventional equality for natural inequality. Conventional equality means equality before the law. This is Rousseau's settled opinion. But here it is a bit complicated; and perhaps it might have been good if you had limited yourself to a discussion of the equality issue in this particular part, you know; you reproduced in a way the confusing side in Rousseau's argument.ⁱⁱ

The second point is of another nature, and this I would say for future use as well¹: Rousseau wrote of course not in the twentieth century. The climate of opinion, as they say, was entirely different than today. And we have to know that climate of opinion if we want to understand Rousseau properly. Rousseau does not take issue with, say, present-day positivism or with other things with which we are familiar today, but with opinions which were relevant in his time. Now, this does not require in itself particular erudition because Rousseau engages in explicit polemics, for example, against Hobbes; and therefore I would say if one simply limits oneself, after having acquired provisional acquaintance with the argument, to those pages where Rousseau criticizes Hobbes, one gets an authentic entrance into Rousseau's thought. Where does he agree with Hobbes? Where does he disagree with Hobbes? Then you have a solid basis. To take a very simple and crude example, but which is good enough as a beginning, Hobbes says that man is bad; man in the state of nature is bad. Rousseau says man in the state of nature is good. Surely that needs an interpretation in both cases, but the fact is undeniable. Hobbes says grown-up man is by nature a strong boy, *puer robustus*ⁱⁱⁱ; a boy with the physical power of a grown-up man, but he has the mind of a boy, a child. Rousseau questioned that, do you remember? This would also be an entry into the argument.

But the difficulty in this particular work is that there is also a kind of implicit polemics—in other words where one sees not immediately that this is said against a well-known position without that position being identified. One point is his argument regarding the Biblical account of men's origins. This is relatively easy to recognize for anyone who knows a bit of the Bible, which of course one cannot presuppose as available universally today. But there is something else which is wholly unrecognizable on the basis of the text, and that is a source deliberately not mentioned by Rousseau and very important. It is now a well-known fact; some French critic² pointed this out about sixty years ago, although people don't usually consider it sufficiently.^{iv} This source is Lucretius, the Roman poet, Epicurean, the fifth book of Lucretius' poem—[blackboard] that is

ⁱ See Rousseau, 1994, 1.9, p. 144.

ⁱⁱ Strauss refers to the seminar paper for this session, which is not recorded.

ⁱⁱⁱ Hobbes, 1998, 11.

^{iv} Strauss presumably has Jean Morel in mind. See Jean Morel, "Recherches sur les Sources du *Discours de l'Inégalité*," *Annales de la Société Jean-Jacques Rousseau*, 5 (1909).

not very clear, but I think you can read it—*On the Nature of Things*, Book 5. Lucretius gives there an account of man's origins and of his development; and Rousseau has modeled his statement in the whole *Discourse*, Parts I and II, on Lucretius, but with interesting deviations. In all such proofs of use of sources, the least interesting, although the most primary, is of course to prove the dependence. The more interesting question is naturally where he deviates from the source; where the peculiarity of the thinker in question will come out.

I would like to say something about his general question. That is necessary and that cannot be seen immediately from this book. This is an account of the origin of man and of man's first stage and how he developed from that. There is definitely a first stage—this is important—i.e. Rousseau does not even discuss the possibility that there might not be a first man. That is the Aristotelian view, the eternity of the visible universe. That is out. Now, this is no peculiarity to Rousseau; that is characteristic of all modern thought, partly under the influence of the Bible, partly under the influence of modern science. That is out. So man has a beginning; there was a first man. Then the question is what is the status of the first man; was it good, was it bad, was it perfect, was it imperfect; and how did it come to present-day men? Present-day men³ [means] here seventeenth and eighteenth century men, but the difference between eighteenth and twentieth is in this respect not important. Now the alternatives were⁴ [these]: either the Biblical account, a perfect beginning and the fall—and there are many traces in Rousseau's argument of this view, a perfect beginning and a fall and the fall due to human fault. But there is also an argument which flatly contradicts it, because Adam, according to the Biblical view, in the Biblical tradition, was created perfect, as a being in full possession of his rationality.^v What is the characteristic of Rousseau's first man?

Student: Irrational.

LS: Stupid animal, he says somewhere^{vi}; I do not know where, but Mr. Butterworth, you may remember where it was, "*animal stupide*." But surely, pre-rational; very important. Yes?

Student: Last time in your discussion you said that given the Hobbean premise that the original man was pre-social, then he must be pre-rational. Could you explain that?

LS: Not now. I will gladly do that, but not now. So, in other words, Rousseau changes the Biblical . . . On the one hand he says it was a wonderful [inaudible], but on the other hand he says this was a stupid animal, sub-rational. And in connection with that, the transition from the original state to the later state is not due to human fault, but to necessity; to an accidental necessity—i.e. not the teleological necessity that man had to develop, but something just happened, which could as well not have happened, and compelled man to change his character, to become a rational animal. Good.

Now, this view that man was not created but had nevertheless a beginning is of course much older than Rousseau. I mean, one can say the non-Aristotelians of classical antiquity, especially the Epicureans, held this view, and Lucretius developed that. So you don't have to consult learned books; you just read the fifth book of Lucretius and you get that. But what is the

^v Strauss is restating the Biblical alternative before stating the alternative that "flatly contradicts it."

^{vi} In the *Social Contract*. See Rousseau, 1994, 1.8, p. 141.

difference between Lucretius and Rousseau? That would be interesting. Now, what do people say today who say man has a beginning, but not a beginning in divine creation; what do they say today? You learn this in elementary schools, I believe. There is a famous word for that.

Student: Environment?

LS: No.

Student: Evolution?

LS: Evolution, evolution. Now in Lucretius, there is no evolution. All species emerged at the same time in the beginning when the earth was formed. Some succeeded in surviving, and others failed to pass the test. Evolution means the genesis of a species from another species; nothing of this kind in Lucretius. But it was already suggested by an acquaintance of Rousseau, who wrote a bit earlier. That was Diderot, a French writer. Diderot had already suggested it, and it was developed then in the early nineteenth century by Lamarck and Darwin. So this doesn't play a particular role in Rousseau's thought, but he was familiar with this notion. This is all we have to say about that. So we have placed Rousseau's view in a very general way.

Now, what is the difference between him and Lucretius which appears here, where we don't have to look at Diderot? That is this: Lucretius discussed fundamentally as Rousseau does the origin and genesis of language. In Rousseau there is something in addition, namely the genesis of reason. I will briefly explain that. According to the Epicurean view, the soul or reason—let us not make this distinction now—is a kind of atoms, i.e. the soul is strictly speaking corporeal. There are certain atoms which as atoms are eternal, and the combination of certain atoms brings about a human being, just as other combinations bring about a lion or a dog. So one cannot speak of a soul proper, but the soul atoms, the bodily soul atoms, are as eternal as any other atoms. Now, this was completely out in modern times. From the very beginning it was understood that the mind or soul, or however you call it, is not corporeal. Even Hobbes admits that. That, say, a desire or a sensation is not in itself something bodily was admitted in modern times from the very beginning by the materialists. They only said: "well, these are mere epiphenomena. The real thing is matter and motion, and certain compounds of matter under certain conditions are accompanied by sensations, ideas, impressions," or whatever the terms were which were used. But the main point is there are no reason atoms. And since primarily you have moved matter or something of this kind, you have to understand reason genetically.

Now, Rousseau discusses here . . . on the premise that there were already human beings—I mean [creatures]⁵ with the bodily characteristics of human beings and therefore possessing sensations and desires—how does reason emerge out of that? This is a bit obscured by the following fact: Rousseau uses frequently the traditional terminology. So he speaks of faculties of the soul, one faculty being reason, and then you get this impression: man was from the very beginning a potentially rational animal; he had the faculty of reason in a dormant state, and the whole process was the actualization of this potency. But the question is whether this view of faculties is legitimate on Rousseau's basis. Now, the faculties were explicitly rejected by Locke in his *Essay Concerning Human Understanding* and, in brief, one can say it as follows: there are no faculties. There are only acts; an act of sensation, an act of will or what have you. Reason,⁶ [which] was

traditionally the faculty of reason, is now the possession of general ideas, as⁷ [they were] called. So if you have this brown here [points to table], that is not a general idea. This of course every animal has, or other colors if⁸ [it doesn't] happen to be sensitive to brown as brown; so this is not peculiar. But color, place, space, and any other general idea—any other idea which does not have a direct equivalent in sensing—that is reason. There is no faculty of reason, but there is the ability, if we use this term in contradistinction to faculty, of having general ideas. General ideas cannot be had in any way prior to the development of language; and more than a mere sign language—I mean by sign language, say, where you have some direct elementary sounds.

Now, this has one absolutely decisive implication, and it is infinitely more interesting than what he explicitly says about species in general of which man did not know [in] the early stage—there is only this oak and that oak; and [he] didn't have the notion "oak." In other words, they called this "bah" and this "bum," or whatever they did, but did not have the wit to say "oak." This is an oak, this is another oak, this is species. And if we say plant, that is the genus. But the most important, in a way, the only important idea of which Rousseau does not⁹ [explicitly] speak, but which of course he has in mind, is which idea? Idea is of course a modern term, as here used now; Descartes, Locke; we use it still today. Now which is the most important of all ideas not simply corresponding to a sense impression?

Student: Mind?

LS: No. No, but God, of course. God would be from this point of view a general idea. The key point is this—that is of course never stated but it follows absolutely necessarily, more necessarily than the night follows the day—that they cannot have had any idea of God. You see immediately the radical difference from the Biblical view—Adam is unthinkable without the idea of God, if we use this modern term of the idea. The same thing we will see in the *Emile*: Rousseau's Emile is a natural man who will be brought up as a natural man and hence he will not hear of God until he is eighteen; not even hear the word. Because that is not an idea which he can legitimately form in his mind; that is the point. So, this general background we must have, must understand; that is absolutely necessary.

Before I turn to Mr. Nicgorski's question, is there any question regarding this very general point I try to make now? Because without it, one will not understand Rousseau for the simple reason, to repeat, that our climate of opinion, i.e. what we learn simply by being dormant, let alone reading a newspaper—which is perhaps only a modified form of dormancy—which we know quasi today, [is not his climate of opinion]; do you see that? Therefore we have to do some work to reconstruct *his* background, this climate of opinion within which and, if I may say, against which he speaks. Yes.

Student: I noticed Rousseau was very reluctant to use the word "will"; and this I suspect would follow necessarily . . .

LS: Yes, that is connected with it, because "will" was traditionally understood as a rational desire, and if there is not reason, there cannot be rational desire.

Student: Where does he find the¹⁰ [impetus] for any virtuous life?

LS: That comes later. In this part we discuss only the beginning; but we must keep this in mind. Mr. Butterworth?

Mr. Butterworth: In this part Rousseau does speak of—uses the term—faculty, rational faculty.^{vii} Would you say he is using “faculty” in an anti-Lockean sense?

LS: No, no. “Faculty” is used, you can say, always in an anti-Lockean sense. “Faculty” always has an anti-Lockean sense. I do not know present-day psychology textbooks, but I am sure that they would never speak of “faculty,” except loosely; but they would never use it as a technical term. But it was a technical term in Aristotle and was linked up absolutely with a potency-act distinction in Aristotle. The fight against the faculty psychology played a very great role in modern psychology since the days of Locke. Externally, it has been absolutely victorious. I don’t suppose anyone speaks today—I mean the so-called scientific psychologists—[of faculties]; that is out. Since Aristotle was so terribly commonsensical, some of these terms are still supported by common sense, and therefore the lapses into that language. In Rousseau that is not a mere lapse; I think that is considered. He says: “Why should I take up all questions at the same time? I leave this [inaudible].” Yes?

Student: The thing is, isn’t his holding [on to] the faculties, which is what he does—isn’t there a possibility to sneak in by this holding [on to] the faculties the idea of God?

LS: That is too general; I don’t understand; where are the true faculties?

Student: It seems to me that basic to the setting up of general ideas is a rejection of the faculties. Is that right?

LS: No. I mean, that is necessary in order to make it stick, to argue it. All right; now what do you say?

Student: That if you can make a case for there being a faculty of reason which develops, however slowly,¹¹ [then] in the period of the development of the faculty of reason it just comes to follow that you can get an idea of God. That is sort of natural to reason.

LS: But we can only say this—forget about what I say about faculties. Primary man has not even the possibility of forming a concept like “oak” or “dog,” where there is some sensible support of it—barking and wagging the tail and what you see. There is still less the possibility of forming the idea of God. We will see more of this when we come to the *Emile*. Mr. Johnson.

Mr. Johnson: I am still a little bit confused¹² [about] the earlier distinction between “faculty” and the Lockean alternative.

LS: There are no faculties; there are only acts. In other words, now I see; then I desire; then I remember. These follow one another; each is cause in its particular way, but it does not make

^{vii} I cannot find “rational faculty,” but Rousseau does sometimes refer to reason as a faculty. See Rousseau, 1992, 34. [Ed.]

sense to speak of faculties for the same reason. Locke—I do not have it here—in the chapter 21 of Book 2, [has] a very long chapter on power, and a few of¹³ [its] paragraphs deal with the faculty. I suggest you read them. What he says is substantially the Molière story. Why does opium make people sleep? Because of its *virtus dormitiva*; the power to make one sleep. You know, it merely explains the same thing by the same thing, which is not an explanation. You have to explain the genesis of memory. That is the theory. But to say that there is a faculty of memory which becomes actualized in this or that way is playing with words. That is the answer. There are only acts. Yes?

Student: When you say that man's power to form general ideas is like that, I can see a trace of the idea of faculty there, which is just . . .

LS: Yes. That is the eternal right of Aristotle, that he is so commonsensical. But from this point of view, on the basis of the new theory, that is impossible. What is the equivalent, if we take Rousseau's procedure as an illustration? "He has the power to reason" means he has speech, he possesses speech. To understand the relation of general ideas to words, and to understand the relation of words to the primary ideas, i.e. sense impressions, that is the theory. Faculties don't make sense. Because faculties would be said to be merely repetitious. Do you see?

Student: Yes, and it even seems to me to have a trace of the rigid distinction between acts and potency.

LS: But is it so rigid? I mean, that is a question. But we are now first trying to understand what Rousseau wants without going into the merits. Before we judge his wisdom or lack of wisdom, we must first know what he means. Mr. Seltzer?

Mr. Seltzer: Will you repeat the point you made regarding Diderot?

LS: He was, as far as I know, the first man who suggested evolution in the sense of emergence of a species out of other species.^{viii}

Student: And does Rousseau follow that?

LS: Yes, I have even the source here. *Pensées sur l'interprétation de la nature, Thoughts on the Interpretation of Nature*, number 58. Whoever has the time may look it up.

Now, let us turn . . . e have first to settle one thing once [and] for all, and that is his remark in the second paragraph of the First Part. Now, in the second half of the first paragraph he says, "without having recourse to the supernatural knowledge which we possess on this point"^{ix}, namely on the status of original man. So here he definitely asserts we possess supernatural knowledge on this point, and that can only mean accepting the Bible. It has no other meaning. Now he says, we disregard it because this is a scientific investigation where revelation cannot be used. Now let us read the second paragraph.

^{viii} Or perhaps Diderot's contemporary, Maupertuis (1698-1759) deserves the credit. See A.O. Lovejoy, "Some Eighteenth Century Evolutionists," *Scientific Monthly* Vol. 71., No. 3 (September 1950).

^{ix} *SD*, 134; 20.

Mr. Reinken: “If we strip this being, thus constituted, of all the supernatural gifts which he may have received—

LS: Yes, “he may have.” That is an ambiguous term which may mean “which it is possible that he has received,” and as a scientist he does not say more; but it can also express a skeptical view. Go on.

Mr. Reinken: “and all the artificial faculties [he can have acquired only by a long process; if we consider him, in a word, just as he must have come] from the hands of nature—”^x

LS: And so on. That is what he wants to do. “The hands of nature,” and he can also say as he said earlier, “as he came out of the hands of the author of nature.”^{xi} That is only the theistic expression for the same thing. So, strictly natural man but with the possibility that the Biblical account might be the full and true account. But for some reason or other, he doesn’t take it up here. We have seen that there were some references to that same thing before.

Let us now turn to the end of the first part of the *Second Discourse*. I have only the French edition. Let us not lose time. Do you have the last paragraph of the first part of the *Second Discourse*?

Mr. Reinken: “This will be a sufficient apology for my not dwelling on the manner in which the lapse of time compensates for the little probability in the events; on the surprising power of trivial causes, when their action is constant; on the impossibility, on the one hand, of destroying certain hypotheses, though on the other we cannot give them the certainty of known matters of fact; on its being within the province of history, when two facts are given as real, and have to be connected by a series of intermediate facts, which are unknown or supposed to be so—”^{xii}

LS: Let us stop here. Two facts are given as real and they have to be connected by a hypothetical link. What does he mean by that? [LS writes on the blackboard] Two facts: here, present-day man; here, original man. What has happened in-between we do not know because there are no records of that. But this we can know by this meditation on the first motions of the soul of which he had spoken prior. That is a fact: natural man was that way which Rousseau presented him. His reservation in favor of the Biblical report is strictly provisional and due to the fact that it could not be said without danger in his time. Yes.

Student: I don’t quite get the point. You mean because here he says that the province of history connects to that?

^x *SD*, 134; 20. The transcriber leaves gaps in the translation; the remainder has been supplied from the G.D.H. Cole translation the class was using. But I have replaced the references to the Cole text with references to the edition of the *Second Discourse* I have been referring to throughout. [Ed.]

^{xi} Rousseau does not use this phrase earlier, but does refer to the “Author” of the human soul in the Preface (*SD*, III, 123; 20).

^{xii} *SD*, 162-63; 42.

LS: Yes, sure. In other words, these intermediate facts are not altogether hypothetical, but history being not *so* reliable, this will always remain hypothetical, at least earlier stages. The pre-history of man will always remain—and by the way it is still hypothetical in spite of all diggings, you know. The really interesting questions are still unclear. Yes?

Student: In the Preface when he talks about the original state of reason, he actually says perhaps it never did exist. Is that an element of [inaudible]?

LS: No, strict Christian orthodoxy. Because what is the Christian teaching? That man was, prior to the fall, not only *in puris naturalibus*, perfectly in his natural state, uncorrupted, but in addition he had graces. He had graces; you must not forget, the degree of knowledge of the Bible and of Christian theology which¹⁴ people like Rousseau had is of course much greater than that of almost any student of political science at the University of Chicago now. I mean, however unbelieving . . . Hobbes was surely not a believing man, but he knew the Bible practically by heart. I mean, he used it for his wicked purposes, but he knew it, how to use it. So that is, I think, strictly orthodox. Or am I wrong regarding the Christian dogma? I believe not. Isn't that correct what I said? Good. But I mention this only [so] that we do not get entangled in a non-existent problem, the problem which exists only superficially. Now, let us go on here in our survey. Will you turn to the beginning of the first part now; paragraph 6? Read that.

Mr. Reinken: "Hobbes contends that man is naturally intrepid, and is intent only upon attacking and fighting. Another illustrious philosopher holds the opposite, and Cumberland and Pufendorf also affirm that nothing is more timid and fearful than man in the state of nature."^{xiii}

LS: So here we have a clear issue. A name is mentioned: Hobbes. Man is by nature the opposite of timid—let us say over-bold? And the others say . . . the illustrious philosopher is Montesquieu, whom he does not mention by name. I do not know the exact . . . when did Montesquieu die, exactly? He was already dead at that time . . .

Student: 1747.

LS: No, no; he died in the '50's^{xiv}, but I do not know when. But Rousseau may have written it—that is different from published it—while he was still alive; I don't know. So that is a clear issue. How does Rousseau stand? We cannot read this very long paragraph, but in the second half of it, he says that man is as ferocious as a beast in the state of nature. This is only a minor illustration that in this particular case Rousseau agrees more with Hobbes than with the gentle people like Montesquieu, Cumberland, and Pufendorf. Now, Cumberland and Pufendorf were the first men who reacted somehow to Hobbes. Cumberland was English, of course, and Pufendorf was German. Pufendorf has taken over¹⁵ [many] of Hobbes's things but mitigated them considerably; and Cumberland simply rejects Hobbes, and the influence of Hobbes [on him] is purely formal. I cannot go into that now. But the point which Rousseau is making here is [that] man is on the whole in the state of nature better off than in society; stronger, healthier, and also (the point

^{xiii} *SD*, 136; 21.

^{xiv} In 1755. The *Second Discourse* was published in the same year but completed in 1754. Montesquieu contrasts his view with Hobbes's in *The Spirit of the Laws*, Book 1, Chapter 2; see Montesquieu, (1989), 6-7.

which he makes in the note), man is not a carnivorous animal: look at his teeth and his skin, [at] the orangutans and other beings. So man is by nature a rather mild beast, not a rapacious beast. So the state of nature is gentle. A bit later he says, “if nature has meant us to be healthy, I¹⁶ dare *almost* to assert that the state of reflection is a state against nature and that man who meditates is a depraved animal.”^{xv} But here one must be careful. Rousseau does not say that. He *almost* [dares to assert it]; and with a condition: if health were the superior consideration—bodily fitness—our reason would be simply bad.

The key point is: man is good by nature. But we must understand it properly: that does not mean that he is virtuous. He cannot be virtuous because he has no reason. He is relatively gentle, he is not a rapacious beast, and he does not have all the vices which presuppose society. Now, in all these points there is presupposed one thing which is crucial and which we must keep in mind. Rousseau tries to discover natural man, man in the state of nature, because nature is a standard. This traditional view is accepted by Rousseau; but it undergoes its greatest crisis within Rousseau because this natural man proves to be not a real human being. And then what is the use of it? But we cannot understand Rousseau if we do not emphasize this point. This man by nature is solitary, asocial. His goodness is an asocial goodness. We have here a reference; this paragraph which begins, “Let us beware of confounding the savage with the man that we have beneath our eyes.”^{xvi}

[Rest of the tape lost. The following has been prepared from lecture notes. It is not known who reads the passages.]

Solitary, indolent, and perpetually accompanied by danger, the savage cannot but be fond of sleep; his sleep too must be light, like that of the animals, which think but little and may be said to slumber all the time they do not think. Self-preservation being his chief and almost sole concern, he must exercise most those faculties which are most concerned with attack or defense, either for overcoming his prey, or for preventing him from becoming the prey of other animals. On the other hand, those organs which are perfected only by softness and sensuality will remain in a gross and imperfect state, incompatible with any sort of delicacy; so that, his senses being divided on this head, his touch and taste will be extremely coarse, his sight, hearing and smell exceedingly fine and subtle.^{xvii}

LS: This is a summary of Rousseau regarding the savage man.

Hitherto I have considered merely the physical man; let us now take a view of him on his metaphysical and moral side.^{xviii}

LS: Rousseau now turns to the metaphysical and moral in contradistinction to the physical. But is this distinction still meaningful in the case of Rousseau?

The key point of the paragraph beginning, “Every animal has ideas”^{xix} is that man is not the rational animal. The essence of man is that he is a free being. This is not the same as Descartes’s

^{xv} SD, 138; 23.

^{xvi} SD, 139; 24.

^{xvii} SD, 140; 25.

^{xviii} SD, 141; 25.

distinction between extension (body) and mind. Descartes draws a line from what goes on in our mind and what goes on in the body. The two are wholly different. For Rousseau sensation—and formation of ideas—is explicable in mechanical terms. Only willing is inexplicable in mechanical terms. This is also the starting point of Kant when he deals with practical reason: the essence of man becomes will. But how important is free will for Rousseau? In the sequel he says freedom of the will as distinguishing man from other animals is exposed to certain difficulties. There is another quality which is not disputable: the quality of men to perfect themselves. Perfectibility is incontestable; that is Rousseau's basis for the distinction. Rousseau calls it a distinctive and *almost* unlimited faculty. This could be called “almost unlimited malleability.”

All other animals have specific instincts. Man has instincts, but not any *specific* instincts.

Savage man, left by nature solely to the direction of instinct, or rather indemnified for what he may lack by faculties capable at first of supplying its place, and afterwards of raising him much above it, must accordingly begin with purely animal functions: thus seeing and feeling must be his first condition, which would be common to him and all other animals. To will, and not to will, to desire and to fear, must be the first, and almost the only operations of his soul, till new circumstances occasion new developments of his faculties.^{xx}

This pre-rational man is formed into a rational man by circumstances, rather than by intrinsic tendencies. What is specifically new in Rousseau is reason's indebtedness to passion. (Any notion of primitive men about God would be given here).

Whatever moralists [may] hold, the human understanding is greatly indebted to the passions, which, it is universally allowed, are also much indebted to the understanding. It is by the activity of the passions that our reason is improved; for we desire knowledge only because we wish to enjoy; and it is impossible to conceive any reason why a person who has neither fears nor desires should give himself the trouble of reasoning. The passions, again, originate in our wants, and their progress depends on that of our knowledge; for we cannot desire or fear anything, except from the idea we have of it, or from the simple impulse of nature. Now savage man, being destitute of every species of intelligence, can have no passions save those of the latter kind: his desires never go beyond his physical wants. The only goods he recognises in the universe are food, a female, and sleep: the only evils he fears are pain and hunger. I say pain, and not death: for no animal can know what it is to die; the knowledge of death and its terrors being one of the first acquisitions made by man in departing from an animal state.^{xxi}

The primacy of reason is replaced by the primacy of passions and needs. Primary man has passions and needs which presuppose no ideas, but which are mere impulses, for example, hunger. These passions and needs he shares with the brutes. What distinguishes man from the brutes is perfectibility.

It would be easy, were it necessary, to support this opinion by facts, and to show that, in all the nations of the world, the progress of the understanding has been exactly proportionate to the wants which the peoples had received from nature, or been subjected to by circumstances, and in consequence to the passions that induced them to provide for those necessities. I might instance

^{xix} *SD*, 141; 26.

^{xx} *SD*, 142-43; 27.

^{xxi} *SD*, 143; 27.

the arts, rising up in Egypt and expanding with the inundation of the Nile. I might follow their progress into Greece, where they took root afresh, grew up and towered to the skies, among the rocks and sands of Attica, without being able to germinate on the fertile banks of the Eurotas: I might observe that in general, the people of the North are more industrious than those of the South, because they cannot get on so well without being so: as if nature wanted to equalize matters by giving their understandings the fertility she had refused to their soil.^{xxii}

Marxism stems from Rousseau at this point: the modes of production change; not by an act of the will, but by a change in the circumstances.

But who does not see without recurring to the uncertain testimony of history, that everything seems to remove from savage man both the temptation and the means of changing his condition? His imagination paints no pictures; his heart makes no demands on him. His few wants are so readily supplied, and he is so far from having the knowledge which is needful to make him want more, that he can have neither foresight nor curiosity. The face of nature becomes indifferent to him as it grows familiar. He sees in it always the same order, the same successions: he has not understanding enough to wonder at the greatest miracles; nor is it in his mind that we can expect to find that philosophy man needs, if he is to know how to notice for once what he sees every day. His soul, which nothing disturbs, is wholly wrapped up in the feeling of its present existence, without any idea of the future, however near at hand; while his projects, as limited as his views, hardly extend to the close of day. Such, even at present, is the extent of the native Caribbean's foresight: he will improvidently sell you his cotton-bed in the morning, and come crying in the evening to buy it again, not having foreseen he would want it again the next night.^{xxiii}

This passage is developed in the *Rêveries du Promeneur Solitaire*. Self-preservation is the characteristic premise of Hobbes, Locke, and Rousseau. The traditional view—the view underlying Plato and Aristotle, which was developed later—was that there are a number of natural inclinations: self-preservation, sociality, and the pursuit of wisdom, or the desire for knowledge. Self-preservation was the lowest, and the desire for knowledge was the highest. The best regime was developed with a view to such a human nature. The modern break came when men sought to “take men as they are.”^{xxiv} Self-preservation is that which is actual in all men, something which is reliable. Rousseau, being a deeper thinker than Hobbes, modified this. He saw that self-preservation could not be the fundamental thing, and therefore sought the premise of self-preservation. Self-preservation, according to Rousseau, implies that life as life is sweet. There must be some experience of this: the sentiment of existence is *the* primary feeling, the fundamental phenomenon. (This is the root of modern existentialism; but now the sentiment is one of anguish, whereas for Rousseau it was sweet). The sweet sentiment of existence induces us to preserve ourselves. We become active, but in this activity, we forget or fail to experience this sentiment of existence. The sentiment of existence is the feeling of self-sufficiency. In Rousseau it is not in the past or in the future: it is all in the present.

The more we reflect on this subject, the greater appears the distance between pure sensation and the most simple knowledge: it is impossible indeed to conceive how a man, by his own powers alone, without the aid of communication and the spur of necessity, could have bridged so great a gap. How many ages may have elapsed before mankind were in a position to behold any other

^{xxii} *SD*, 143-44; 27.

^{xxiii} *SD*, 144; 28.

^{xxiv} Paraphrasing the introductory paragraph of Book I of the *Social Contract* (Rousseau, 1994, 131).

fire than that of the heavens. What a multiplicity of chances must have happened to teach them the commonest uses of that element! How often must they have let it out before they acquired the art of reproducing it? and how often may not such a secret have died with him who had discovered it? What shall we say of agriculture, an art which requires so much labor and foresight, which is so dependent on others that it is plain it could only be practised in a society which had at least begun, and which does not serve so much to draw the means of subsistence from the earth—for these it would produce of itself—but to compel it to produce what is most to our taste? But let us suppose that men had so multiplied that the natural produce of the earth was no longer sufficient for their support; a supposition, by the way, which would prove such a life to be very advantageous for the human race; let us suppose that, without forges or workshops, the instruments of husbandry had dropped from the sky into the hands of savages; that they had overcome their natural aversion to continual labor; that they had learnt so much foresight for their needs; that they had divined how to cultivate the earth, to sow grain and plant trees; that they had discovered the arts of grinding corn, and of setting the grape to ferment—all being things that must have been taught them by the gods, since it is not to be conceived how they could discover them for themselves—yet after all this, what man among them would be so absurd as to take the trouble of cultivating a field, which might be stripped of its crop by the first comer, man or beast, that might take a liking to it; and how should each of them resolve to pass his life in wearisome labor, when, the more necessary to him the reward of his labor might be, the surer he would be of not getting it? In a word, how could such a situation induce men to cultivate the earth, till it was regularly parcelled out among them; that is to say, till the state of nature had been abolished?^{xxv}

Here Rousseau makes clear the lack of teleological necessity. The developments have been due to accidents. The genesis of language, which he develops later, is identical with the genesis of reason: ideas cannot be introduced into the mind without words. If reason presupposes language, and there is a genesis of reason, there must be a genesis of language.

Locke's fight is against innate ideas. Contrary to what Descartes thought, there are no innate ideas. The idea of God cannot be a sensible idea; it must therefore be a general idea.

But I stop at this point, and ask my judges to suspend their reading a while, to consider, after the invention of physical substantives, which is the easiest part of language to invent, that there is still a great way to go, before the thoughts of men will have found perfect expression and constant form, such as would answer the purposes of public speaking, and produce their effect on society. I beg of them to consider how much time must have been spent, and how much knowledge needed, to find out numbers, abstract terms, aorists and all the tenses of verbs, particles, syntax, the method of connecting propositions, the forms of reasoning, and all the logic of speech. For myself, I am so aghast at the increasing difficulties which present themselves, and so well convinced of the almost demonstrable impossibility that languages should owe their original institution to merely human means, that I leave, to any one who will undertake it, the discussion of the difficult problem, which was most necessary, the existence of society to the invention of language, or the invention of language to the establishment of society. But be the origin of language and society what they may, it may be at least inferred, from the little care which nature has taken to unite mankind by mutual wants, and to facilitate the use of speech, that she has contributed little to make them sociable, and has put little of her own into all they have done to create such bonds of union.^{xxvi}

^{xxv} *SD*, 144-45; 28-29.

^{xxvi} *SD*, 151; 33.

Nature did not make men sociable; it did not even prepare man's sociability. As Hobbes said earlier, nature dissociates. Rousseau's concern about man's asociability has to do with making all obligations dependent on consent.

Rousseau uses much theological language. It is possible to interpret Rousseau's doctrine in a quasi-theistic manner, and say that Rousseau gave the true theism. The problem is how to account for a just God in an evil world. Dissatisfied with the Biblical account, Rousseau explains that man *had* to be that way. "It appears, at first view, that men in a state of nature, having no moral relations or determinate obligations one with another, could not be either good or bad, virtuous or vicious unless we take these terms in a physical sense, and call, in an individual, those qualities vices which may be injurious to his preservation, and those virtues which contribute to it; in which case, he would have to be accounted most virtuous, who put least check on the pure impulses of nature."^{xxvii}

Rousseau has said that man is by nature good. He qualifies that: man is by nature neither good nor bad. In primitive man there was no morality or immorality.

Rousseau says that natural law requires that it be duly promulgated. He proves that it could not have been known by man at the beginning. "Above all, let us not conclude with Hobbes, that because man has no idea of goodness, he must be naturally wicked; that he is vicious because he does not know virtue; that he always refuses to do his fellow-creatures services which he does not think they have a right to demand; or that by virtue of the right he truly claims to everything he needs, he foolishly imagines himself the sole proprietor of the whole universe."^{xxviii}

Hobbes says primitive man is by nature bad. Rousseau says that he is neither good nor bad; he is pre-moral. "Hobbes had seen clearly the defects of all the modern definitions of natural right: but the consequences which he deduces from his own show that he understands it in an equally false sense."^{xxix}

At issue is the effect of the traditional definition of natural right. Rousseau says the foundation of natural law is something which must be effective in all men at all times. This is why Hobbes found it in a passion. But Hobbes drew false conclusions: this primary pre-social man is, for this reason, pre-rational. He has a natural desire for self-preservation; but to figure out that in order to preserve himself securely he needs society; that, this primitive man could not have done.

Hobbes and Rousseau agree that the key phenomenon is self-preservation. But Hobbes says, there is another thing: pride. Man not only wants to keep alive, but he also wants to be superior to others. Man is by nature bad, and society is good, because its function is the keep down bad inclinations.

For Rousseau here the second consideration is compassion. Natural man has no desire to distinguish himself. Therefore man is by nature good. But this is a pre-moral goodness. Man is

^{xxvii} *SD*, 152; 34.

^{xxviii} *SD*, 153; 35.

^{xxix} *SD*, 153; 35.

by nature good in this qualified sense. This almost automatically means that society is bad. To live in society means to develop these meannesses. Therefore men need repressive government. Pride is essentially a social thing, so Rousseau's natural man does not have it. Pity is the sole source of social virtues. Where compassion is in control, there cannot be pride. "It is then certain that compassion is a natural feeling, which, by moderating the violence of love of self in each individual, contributes to the preservation of the whole species. It is this compassion that hurries us without reflection to the relief of those who are in distress: it is this which in a state of nature supplies the place of laws, morals, and virtues, with the advantage that none are tempted to disobey its gentle voice."

Love of self, *amour propre*,^{xxx} is the desire for self-preservation. But man has also compassion. This leads to a paradox. Rousseau does not wish to have a social passion; but on the other hand, he needs something like it. "It is this which will always prevent a sturdy savage from robbing a weak child or a feeble old man of the sustenance they may have with pain and difficulty acquired, if^{xxxi} he sees the possibility of providing for himself by other means."

Rousseau modifies the Golden Rule. He says, "Do good to yourself with *as little evil as possible to others*."^{xxxii} So, this goodness of natural man is very qualified. We are shown a little [of] the nastiness of Rousseau.

For Hobbes the basis of society is sheer calculation. This rational act is the sole basis of society. Rousseau says this is not sufficient: we must have compassion. It is not an ordering towards society, but it is something which enables us to enter society if certain conditions obtain.

In the third paragraph from the end of the First Part, Rousseau returns to the official subject on which he is supposed to write, the theme which goes through the whole of Rousseau, the perfectibility of men, which is different from the perfectibility of animals. But this perfectibility is due to mechanical and accidental necessity. The transition from the state of nature to society is due to accidents. The perfection of human reason radically differs from, and is incompatible with, the perfection of the species. For this reason, virtue is ambiguous in Rousseau.

This is the problem in the beginning of the *Emile*. Making man a citizen is incompatible with making him a true human being. Rousseau regarded the human problem as insoluble, and these incompatibilities are his formula for this insolubility.

Summary

Science must be in the service of virtue. There is no supremacy of theoretical reason, as there is in Aristotle, nor may science be in the service of power. This view is therefore against Aristotle, Bacon, Hobbes, and Descartes.

^{xxx} The term Rousseau uses here is *amour de soi même*, not *amour propre*. For the difference see *SD*, 219; 91.

^{xxxi} Strauss's emphasis.

^{xxxii} *SD*, 156; 37-38. Rousseau emphasizes the whole sentence quoted here—so the italicized portion reflects Strauss's emphasis.

The difficulty concerns virtue: What is it? Virtue can have an amoral meaning, which Rousseau called “goodness,” as distinguished from “virtue.” Virtue [as distinguished from goodness] presupposes reason and a sense of duty; it is moral. Virtue is connected with reason; goodness is connected with the heart, in contradistinction to reason. It is spontaneous, natural, i.e. connected with sensibility.

Virtue is the requisite for society; Rousseau admits society because he admits virtue. But the difficulty is [that] society cannot solve the human problem, and even aggravates it.

Rousseau gave rise to many things, among them Marx and Freud. Marx thought that the perfect solution to the human problem is possible only in and through society. But today, the angry young men^{xxxiii}, such as Riesman,^{xxxiv} etc., show that this does not solve the problem. Rousseau rode both horns of the dilemma: maximum social improvement, the perfection of the species in a democratic republic, solves the problem for the majority of men and does it without psychoanalysis. The few individuals who cannot be satisfied with this will find their satisfaction in something transcending society. This is the sentiment of existence, something like the “beatific vision.” These people live at the margin of society. They are the artist and the bohemian today. In *Rêveries du Promeneur Solitaire*, Rousseau develops this thought of the sentiment of existence. This sentiment of existence is Rousseau’s equivalent to the theoretical life in Aristotle. The concept of art today is the attempt to find a substitute for something transcending society as society.

END OF LECTURE

¹ Deleted “that is this.”

² Deleted “has.”

³ Deleted “meaning.”

⁴ Deleted “this.”

⁵ Inserted for sense.

⁶ Deleted “that.”

⁷ Deleted “it was.”

⁸ Deleted “they don’t.”

⁹ Deleted “implicitly.”

¹⁰ Deleted “imperium.”

¹¹ Deleted “that.”

^{xxxiii} It is not clear whether Strauss refers to the British literary “group” which was referred to by that name.

^{xxxiv} David Riesman, American sociologist. Author of *The Lonely Crowd* (Yale University Press, 1950), in which Riesman famously distinguished between “other-directedness” and “inner-directedness.”

¹² Deleted “between.”

¹³ Deleted “these.”

¹⁴ Deleted “such.”

¹⁵ Deleted “much.”

¹⁶ Deleted “almost.”

Session 4

[In progress] **LS:** I did not quite understand the last sentence, which was very laconic.

Student: Not being able to understand precisely the role which population plays.

LS: Yes, that I know, but what

Student: I thought that there is a real . . . Rousseau himself has a real problem, in that his particular feeling that an increased population is good is not simply a bow to Biblical morality, nor an agreement with Marxism.

LS: No, as we can prove from the *Social Contract*, there is a chapter, “What is the sign of a good government?”ⁱ Increase in population. No, that is clear.

I liked not only what you said,ⁱⁱ but also how you said it. The clear and emphatic enunciation which is based on some awareness that you must attract the attention of, you know, perhaps awaken, the slumbering,¹ which is, I think, very good; and you will, I hope, not forget it when you become a teacher. Now, the difficulties are absolutely overwhelming and you have become aware of many of them.

Let me say first a word about two questions which were raised. Mr. Seltzer, regarding the meaning of freedom and the contradictory meanings which I could not but reproduce in my chapter on Rousseau, I think I can answer this simply: read *Social Contract*, Book 1, Chapter 9, and I believe it will become clear. In other words, freedom may mean mere independence, in no way being subject to another man’s will; it may also have a somewhat different meaning. Good.

Regarding Mr. Butterworth’s question, “Rousseau attacks science in the name of a higher science.” Did I say that?

Mr. Butterworth: Yes, you did,

LS: Yes. Well, you see, there are many things which you are compelled to say and then you have to explain them away. I mean, I believe I know what I meant by that, but let me now for convenience’s sake retract to the absolutely safe ground which I took more than once: Rousseau attacks science in the name of virtue. Whether this virtue understood is not some higher form of science, we will see later. Let us postpone that, if you don’t mind.

Student: Could I just ask one question about that? I think what you were trying to say was [that], by the very nature of his reasoning against these things² he was using the higher science.

LS: Yes, it has also something to do with that beatific vision of which our friend spoke last time. But that leads us now too far. As for the statement “every useless citizen is a pernicious man,”

ⁱ Book 3, Chapter 9, “On the Signs of a Good Government” (Rousseau, 1994, 185).

ⁱⁱ Strauss refers to this session’s seminar paper, which is not recorded.

which is preceded I think by the remark, some remark about leisure, yes? Every citizen who does not work.ⁱⁱⁱ

Student: Yes. “*Inutile*” is the word.

LS: Yes. This has been corrected by Rousseau himself in a later remark about himself, that he was indeed a useless man, but not for this reason a pernicious man.^{iv} Now there are some other points which you raise here, regarding what does it mean [that] man is by nature good? Of course the first impression is simply what we all understand by “good”; but then Rousseau makes clear he cannot have been morally good. What was it? He was free from pride and all the other passions which induce men to inflict unnecessary harm on others. Now this goodness is merely the absence of motives for harming unnecessarily. I mean,³ [he will harm] where necessary; as we have seen, if he can’t preserve himself without harming another, he will do it. Then, what would happen to his argument against Hobbes? Very simply, Hobbes says that man, natural man, has already this viciousness in himself; and Rousseau says that this viciousness has been acquired in societies, not original. So there is this difference. I mean, if we stick to the simple statement which needs no explanation, pride qualifies self-preservation, according to Hobbes; and according to Rousseau, compassion qualifies it. That is clearly . . . if Rousseau is correct, man is better than he is according to Hobbes.

Student: Yes, but this is the point: insofar as he has to say that man is better or that man is good,⁴ he can’t maintain that statement, because he has to say: “by good I mean that man”

LS: Yes, sure, but then you have to take a very broad view, what he is really up against. Have you ever read the motto of the *Emile* from Seneca^v? “We suffer from curable ills.” We suffer from curable ills, curable by human medicine, the medicine being politics, of course. Now, all our ills are curable by political means. That is the meaning of “man is good.” His ills are curable by himself. There is no original sin. There is no need for divine redemption. That is, I think, the polemical meaning of that statement.

Student: But even so, doesn’t this then also necessarily take the implication that there is no original virtue either?

LS: Surely not. Because original sin can only be when man was created perfect, of course. Let us take the simple scheme, man was created perfect. [Blackboard] I will use a “P”⁵, which here means perfect, not pride. And then there is a fall; and then there is a need [for] and the fact of redemption. Is this clear? This has infinite consequences, also politically. And Rousseau is against this whole scheme just as Hobbes was before him. But let us disregard now what Hobbes

ⁱⁱⁱ Discussion is of *FD*, 18-19; 13. The statement in quotation marks is not a direct quote.

^{iv} In the Sixth Walk of the *Reveries*. See Rousseau, *The Reveries of the Solitary Walker, Botanical Writings, and Letter to Franquière*s, trans. Charles E. Butterworth, Alexandra Cook, and Terence E. Marshall, ed. Christopher Kelly (Hanover, NH: University Press of New England, 2000), 56.

^v From Seneca’s “On Anger.” Strauss gives part of the motto, which reads “We are sick with evils that can be cured; and nature, having brought us forth sound, itself helps us if we wish to be improved.” See Jean-Jacques Rousseau, *Emile, Or on Education* (Includes *Emile and Sophie* or *The Solitaries*), trans. and ed. by Christopher Kelly and Allan Bloom, Hanover, NH: University Press of New England, 2010), 155.

did, and look only at Rousseau. Rousseau says this first, apparently repeating: man is good at the beginning. And then of course there must be something like a fall. Where should the evil come from? Then he says, he first says, well, in what sense was he good? He was too stupid to be bad. So, number one. What about the fall? An act of the will? *No*; natural necessity led to it. Do you see? So when you consider the position which Rousseau attacks, his famous formulae become intelligible as a kind of provisional slogans which have to be translated into precise language. Indeed. But one must not become a prisoner of slogans.

Student: This is what I was . . . when he starts this argument

LS: Read the motto of the *Emile*, which is unfortunately in Latin, but Mr. Nicgorski will be glad to translate it for you. “We suffer from curable ills”; and fundamentally because there is a human nature. Nature cannot be corrupted; there is the implication. The difficulties are sometimes simply overwhelming, and one would have to write a commentary ten times as long as this *Discourse* to examine them. By the way, thinking of what we are doing here, of course a whole quarter would be barely sufficient for a proper study of this *Second Discourse*. That we cannot afford. If we had to read For example in the case of Locke, if we limit ourselves to the *Second Treatise*, one can read this with some care in one quarter. But I would think it is bad procedure, because one has also to know the *First Treatise*; and then you have already the problem of how to do so many things in one quarter. Mr. Morrison.

Mr. Morrison: I don’t know if Rousseau mentioned this in any way, but it seems to me in view of what we were saying before, that it is curious that the apple came off the tree of knowledge of good and evil. That is very interesting.

LS: This phrase occurs somewhere?

Mr. Morrison: In the Garden of Eden.

LS: Well, “apple” is of course already an interpretation. There is nothing in the text of Genesis

Mr. Morrison: Whatever it was

LS: The fruit.

Mr. Morrison: The fruit came off the tree of good and evil.

LS: He refers to it?

Mr. Morrison: No. I was wondering if he ever did.

LS: You see what those unfortunate ones who don’t read French cannot do is to read the notes which Rousseau appended and which are quite important. Cole has translated only one or two, I think, which is in itself a sign of insufficient understanding, because that is all necessary. First, let me say a few words about what you said. Yes, I think this absolutely crucial, that the fall is

translated by a natural necessity, and a non-teleological necessity; as Rousseau calls it, an accident happened. Now,⁶ this process⁷ is a strictly—I mean if you develop it—a strictly deterministic process, and one determining factor of the utmost importance is of course human ignorance. [That] at the foundation of government, that they were so easily cheated by this crooked rich man, that was due to their stupidity, their lack of experience; and also that the mechanism was so insufficient, that it degraded so easily into despotism, that was due to a lack of experience. But the wisdom comes out through necessity. Through the bad experience with despotism, a better understanding is forced upon them. Some fellow, say Rousseau, will at a certain moment simply by the comparison of a less despotic government in Geneva with a more despotic government in France, and with some historical knowledge available from classical antiquity, get the notion of how to establish a free government on safe grounds. You see, this is due to a complete necessity, but which fundamentally is not a teleological necessity. “It so happened.” And then, that men think is also a necessity, men having this kind of brain, so to speak. This is, I think, what he has in mind.

What you said is absolutely correct, that Rousseau stands between Locke and Marx. That is perfectly true. Property—the key notion in Locke—and⁸ [Rousseau’s] interpretation of the genesis of property and of property right is very close to Locke, and also to Marx. And you referred especially to the division of labor. I have been accused by a recent book on Rousseau^{vi} of having overlooked this passage about the division of labor, simply because I didn’t mention it. But it is surely there, and it is very important for the development, because the division of labor is . . . i.e. that man is no longer, can no longer take care of all his needs, but it becomes divided, split, specialized. This, as you know, is one of *the* main points of Marx. At the end there will be a restoration of the whole man, every man developing all faculties. That is surely true.

You emphasized rightly his praise of the savages. The explicit teaching of Rousseau is without any question in the *Discourse* that the savage life is the highest life, higher than that of this first primitive man, and surely higher than anything coming later; and you added wisely [that] we must beware of that. We will try to do exactly that. The increase of population which creates a great difficulty, what does Rousseau mean? The primitive man, healthy beast, procreates considerably, populates the earth, and then this healthy development leads to bad consequences. That is, as you see, the historical dialectic: that sound actions do not lead to sound consequences, but to unsound consequences, and then on and on until the end—say in Rousseau’s time—a notion emerges of how one could get the state in healthy order. Can you restate your difficulty?

Student: No, I think that I recognized that. Namely, that he recognizes increase as a good thing; and that it takes place⁹ is a sign of the closeness of man to the original state; and yet it is from this increase that man leaves that original state, and gets set on the path . . .

LS: Yes. In other words, consider also the anti-theological implications. By fulfilling the commandment to multiply—I mean, not by any sin, not by the sin of eating Mr. Morrison’s apple, but by fulfilling the divine commandment, be fruitful and multiply—man destroys [inaudible]. I mean, if we put it [inaudible]. But Rousseau surely considered that, that is quite true, considered increasing population as the only clear sign of good government. For example,

^{vi} Possibly Iring Fetscher, *Rousseau’s Politische Philosophie: zur Geschichte des Demokratischen Freiheitbegriffs* (Neuwied: H. Luchterhand, 1960). Strauss refers to this text directly later in the lecture.

that there was an increase in population after the Second World War compared with the period of depression—he would say [suggests that] America was better governed after the Second War than under Hoover and/or Roosevelt. You see why I say “and/or” because this is a difficult question, when it took place. Good.

Now there is one point which is really not very important, it is just a matter of gossip, not even higher gossip. What did you say about poor Mr. Cole?

[Inaudible discussion regarding a point in Cole’s translation]

Student: —and I think he refers to both adjectives of Midas, wealthy but miserable.

LS: Oh, I see; not poor. Thank you. But this is indeed not of decisive importance.

So now, we turn first to the beginning of this second part, where Rousseau makes a very strong rhetorical assertion that private property is the basis of civil society; and—which is, of course, the Lockean point—[that] the purpose of government is to protect property. He quotes Locke himself later on explicitly, “*le sage Locke*,” the wise Locke, who said what? There cannot be any injustice where there is no property.^{vii} Therefore prior to the establishment of property men could do no wrong. But this only in passing.

In the second paragraph he gives a summary which is of some importance, because it is not a mere repetition: it puts the emphasis somewhat differently. Do you have it?

Mr. Reinken: “Man’s first feeling was that of his own existence, and his first care that of self-preservation.”

LS: —“of *its* preservation”; or no, of his preservation, but the preservation of his existence. First he feels existence as something good, and therefore he is anxious to preserve it. Yes.

Student: “The produce of the earth furnished him with all he needed, and instinct told him how to use it. Hunger and other appetites made him at various times experience various modes of existence; and among these was one which urged him to propagate his species—a blind propensity that, having nothing to do with the heart, produced a merely animal act. The want once gratified, the two sexes knew each other no more; and even the offspring was nothing to its mother, as soon as it could do without her—”

LS: Now, what strikes you? I mean, we have heard this before, but there is a difference between this restatement.

Student: Compassion—self-preservation.^{viii}

^{vii} *SD*, 170; 48.

^{viii} Presumably the student is pointing out that although Rousseau sees two principles, self-preservation and pity, anterior to reason, he only mentions the first here.

LS: Yes, that is very good. I did not even think of it. That is very good, because in a writing which Rousseau published a few years after that, he practically does away with compassion.^{ix} You know, this was already very dubious here, because we have seen this compassion is not different from what a horse senses when it sees a dead body. I mean this is nothing to boast of, and it is not terribly important, anyway. That is one. But there is something more important: the silence about the cognitive status. He speaks here only of the appetitive life of man, not of the cognitive life. Rousseau is not going to describe the development of the cognitive side of man.

Student: I think he implies that, when he states “they produce mere animal acts.”

LS: Yes, but this refers all to the drives, to the needs; he does not refer to the cognitive acts. You know, that man has only sensations. How these sensations develop into something like reason, into general ideas; nothing is said of that. Rousseau in a word is not going to describe the genesis of the idea of gods and of God. That goes through the whole thing. That the savages are pagans is not mentioned [in the main text], only in the footnote; but everyone knows it, of course. You see that helps a bit for understanding what Rousseau is doing. In the immediate sequel, but not in this summary, he says, “Such was the condition of man when being born, when emerging; such was the life of an animal limited to begin with to the mere or pure sensations,” having no general ideas.^x

He describes then the causality very powerfully in the next paragraph, which we cannot read. He was *forced* by accident—that comes in again. Forcing is of course in the old sense of the word unnatural; I mean Aristotle.^{xi} [LS goes to the blackboard] [The] natural is opposed to the violent. The simple case, that is natural. You hold an accident against the natural unity, violent accident. Violent does not mean savage; [it means] against nature. So against the nature of man something was done; and this molded him. That is the meaning of this whole discussion here. Let us read at the end of the third paragraph following the paragraph which was just read.

Mr. Reinken: “Thus the relations which we denote by the terms, great, small, strong, weak, swift, slow, fearful, bold, and the like, almost insensibly compared at need, must have at length produced in him a kind of reflection, or rather a mechanical prudence, which would indicate to him the precautions most necessary to his security.”^{xii}

LS: Yes: mechanical or “*machinale*.” That is to be taken very literally: he belongs to the animal machine; there is nothing spiritual involved. Somewhat further on, let us read when he comes to

^{ix} I am not sure what work Strauss is referring to. The *Letter to D'Alembert* fits Strauss's chronology and certainly makes pity out to be weak in civilized societies. But that is something different from almost doing away with pity. *The Essay on the Origin of Languages* could be said almost to do away with pity, at least pity understood as one of two principles anterior to reason because that work suggests both that pity derives from self-love and is completely inactive prior to reflection (Jean-Jacques Rousseau, *Essay on the Origin of Languages*, in *Essay on the Origin of Languages and Other Writing Related to Music*, trans. and ed. John Scott (Hanover, NH: University Press of New England, 1998), 305-6). However, the *Essay* was published only posthumously. [Ed.]

^x *SD*, 164; 43.

^{xi} *Physics*, Book 8, Part 4.

^{xii} *SD*, 165; 44.

the first great revolution, about two or three pages later, “These progresses, these first progresses finally enabled man to make still more rapid ones.”

Student: “These first advances enabled men to make others with greater rapidity. In proportion as they grew enlightened, they grew industrious. They ceased to fall asleep under the first tree, or in the first cave that afforded them shelter; they invented several kinds of implements of hard and sharp stones, which they used to dig up the earth, and to cut wood; they then made huts out of branches, and afterwards learnt to plaster them over with mud and clay. This was the epoch of a first revolution, which established and distinguished families, and introduced a kind of property, in itself the source of a thousand quarrels and conflicts.”^{xiii}

LS: Stop here and go to the next paragraph where he describes now how the family develops. “The sweetest sentiments known to man, conjugal love and paternal love.”^{xiv} That comes only at this particular stage. We do not have to read that, but the development of *amour propre*, of this bad kind of self-love, begins to take place at this stage. I think we should read the paragraph beginning about a page later, “Everything begins to change its look.”

Student: “Men, who have up to now been roving in the woods, by taking to a more settled manner of life, come gradually together, form separate bodies, and at length in every country arises a distinct nation, united in character and manners, not by regulations or laws, but by uniformity of life and food, and the common influence of climate.”^{xv}

LS: Yes; you see the emphasis: the external influences mold men, and mold men in different parts of the globe differently. So by natural causality, quasi-nations emerge. They are not molded by the legislator or founder of the society, but they come into being by sheer natural causation.

Mr. Reinken: Do you want me to make the cues in French?

LS: It is not necessary. That is sufficient for our purpose. But we have to come now to the more important and crucial passage. This is the state of which Rousseau says, “That is the state of the savages known to eighteenth century Europe,”^{xvi} and he thinks of course in the first place of the North American Indians. What does he say about this state in general? We turn to the paragraph beginning, about two pages later, “But one must observe that the society which has commenced and the relations already established among men, demanded from them qualities different from those which they had in their primitive constitution.” Go on, please.

Mr. Reinken: “Morality began to appear in human actions, and every one, before the institution of law, was the only judge and avenger of the injuries done him, so that the goodness which was suitable in the pure state of nature was no longer proper in the new-born state of society.”

LS: “*La société naissante*,” the society in the process of birth, society being born. The pure nature, the pure state of nature is that of the stupid animal. Here this state of the society coming

^{xiii} SD, 167, 45-46.

^{xiv} SD, 168; 46.

^{xv} SD, 169; 47.

^{xvi} Not a direct quote. See SD, 170, 48.

into being is the state of the savages, of which Rousseau always condemned [inaudible] these tribes. Yes.

Mr. Reinken: “Punishments had to be made more severe as opportunities for offending became more frequent and the dread of vengeance had to take the place of the rigor of the law. Thus, though men had become less patient, and their natural compassion had already suffered from diminution—”

LS: Well, I should say so. He must have heard something of scalping. Yes.

Mr. Reinken: “this period of expansion of the human faculties—”

LS: “Of development.”^{xvii} Why did he translate that? Yes.

Mr. Reinken: “of development of the human faculties, keeping a just mean between the indolence of the primitive state and the petulant activity of our egoism, must have been the happiest and most stable of epochs. The more we reflect on it, the more we shall find that this state was the least subject to revolutions, and altogether the very best man could experience—”

LS: Why does he say that? “The best for man.” He clearly says the best for man.

Mr. Reinken: “so that he can have departed from it only through some fatal accident, which, for the public good, should never have happened.”

LS: Yes, you see; not sin. That I emphasize again. A fatal accident brought about the coming degradation.

Mr. Reinken: “The example of savages, most of whom have been found in this state, seems to prove that men were meant to remain in it, that it is the real youth of the world, and that all subsequent advances have been apparently so many steps towards the perfection of the individual, but in reality towards the decrepitude of the species.”^{xviii}

LS: Now, this is a very strong statement. We must take it seriously, surely; we cannot dismiss it on the basis of very general impressions that he cannot have meant it. The most recent interpretation of Rousseau which I have seen, in German, [is] by someone called Fetscher, *Rousseau's Political Philosophy* (1960)^{xix}. He asserts that this is really the statement of Rousseau's opinion; and he blames me in particular for not having made this the center of interpretation. I have reconsidered again, but I must still say I believe he is wrong. But let us put this on a broad basis. By the way, he repeats it in the second paragraph after the one you read, when he says that metallurgy and agriculture have ruined the human race. Metallurgy and agriculture came after the savage state; these were pastoral tribes, or hunters, the youth of the world. So it was bad for the species. Compassion was practically destroyed in the later stages,

^{xvii} Rather than “expansion.”

^{xviii} *SD*, 170-71; 48-4.

^{xix} Iring Fetscher, *Rousseaus politische Philosophie; zur Geschichte des demokratischen Freiheitsbegriffe* (Neuwied am Rhein: Luchterhand, 1968).

whereas here it was only impaired but not yet destroyed. This is the point. Now, if this interpretation is correct, it surely follows, from what Rousseau says in the notes about the savages known through the reports of missionaries among other people, that these savages were of course pagans. It would surely mean that a certain kind of paganism is superior to everything which came after. Fetscher does not draw this conclusion, but I think he would be compelled to draw it. But let us consider the thesis in itself. Two or three pages later on, when he has described the next stage of the early agricultural societies, which are no longer savage, he says—read that, “Here all our faculties are developed.” They were not yet developed in savage society. “Memory and imagination—” Read that.

Mr. Reinken: “Memory and imagination in full play, egoism interested, reason active, and the mind almost at the highest point of its perfection.”^{xx}

LS: Stop here. You see, the human faculties are developed. But this is an ambiguous term. Were they fully developed? The answer is no. The *esprit*—this is not simply mind, *esprit*; it means also most directly in English “spirit.” The spirit arrived *almost* at the term of its perfection. Of reason he does not say that. He says reason has been rendered active. However this may be, we return to the consideration of the savages proper. In the stage of the savages, our faculties were not yet developed. Obviously; that follows. That takes place only in the agricultural stage. Rousseau says then in plain English, in praising the savages as highly as he did, the development of our faculties is bad for the human race. Obviously; by the simply putting together of two and two, we arrive at this conclusion. But how is this compatible with Providence, that we are given certain faculties, the development of which is bad for the human race? One way out would be to say the development of our faculties is due not to Providence, but to sin: man was meant to remain a child. But this is surely not what Rousseau says. The development of the faculties was due to accident; to mechanical necessity. Still, it is paradoxical that the development of our faculties should as such be bad. I have to come back here to a question I raised last time. Is not perhaps the root of the difficulty that we speak of faculties? Is there not a concession on Rousseau’s part to the still-prevailing view that he speaks of the faculties?

I read to you a passage from a writing of Rousseau’s, a letter to the archbishop of Paris, Monsieur de Beaumont, which he wrote in defense of his *Emile* and his *Social Contract*. He says here, to the Archbishop: “You assume, as do those who treat of these matters, that man brings with himself his reason altogether formed; and the only thing which is important is that he puts it to work.” In other words, he has a fully-developed reason and he has only to reason to use that reason. “This is not true,” Rousseau says, “for one of man’s acquisitions, and even one of the slowest acquisitions, is reason.”^{xxi}

Reason has to be acquired, and this means not merely that the actualization of reason has been acquired, but the faculty of reason itself; [that is] the only way of understanding that. So therefore we have to disregard this faculty-language altogether if we want to understand what Rousseau is driving at.

^{xx} *SD*, 174; 51.

^{xxi} Jean-Jacques Rousseau, *Letter to Beaumont, Letters Written from the Mountain, and Related Writings*, trans. Christopher Kelly and Judith R. Bush, ed. Christopher Kelly and Eve Grace (Hanover, NH: University Press Of New England, 2001), 39.

Student: Would you give us the page to that?

LS: In this edition, the Garnier edition of the *Social Contract*, page 457. So, in other words, if we drop the faculty-language altogether, following Locke, then this interpretation would still be correct; Rousseau regarded the savages—you remember what he means by savages—the savage life as the peak of human life; and everything since then was a degradation. This could be. What reasons do we have to question that view? Mr. Nicgorski, has something occurred to you in your reading?

Walter Nicgorski: In the paragraph which immediately follows that paragraph where he says that this is the happiest and most stable period for all human beings, he summarizes the characteristics of the savage life; and he does it in such a way that one almost begins to think that he means it with some irony. “So long as men remained content with their rustic huts, so long as they were satisfied with clothes made of the skins of animals and sewn together with thorns and fish bones, adorned themselves only with feathers and shells, and continued to paint their bodies different colours, to improve and beautify their bows and arrows and to make with sharp-edged stones fishing boats or clumsy musical instruments; in a word, so long as they undertook only what a single person could accomplish, and confined themselves to such arts as did not require the joint labour of several hands, they lived free, healthy, honest and happy lives, so long as their nature allowed, and as they continued to enjoy the pleasures of mutual and independent intercourse.”

LS: Well, does this settle it?

Student: No.

LS: Because someone could say it is much better to be a free man in the forest—you know, developing all your faculties, if I may use this language—instead of being a half, a quarter, or quintessential or less man, like these people in civil society with our specialized vocation colleges and so on; and not to be dependent on these terrible physicians, [inaudible], and lawyers and so. This wouldn't settle it. No.

Student: But it raises a question; the tone of the [inaudible] raises a certain question whether he would be satisfied with this state.

LS: But he has said it; and to begin with, an explicit and emphatic utterance has to be given . . . unless it is contradicted by an equally explicit and emphatic utterance; then we are entitled to raise the question, “is this the last word?” Mr. Schrock.

Thomas Schrock: Could you reformulate the issue between you and this German author?

LS: Is the state of the savages as described the peak of human development, as he says, and as Rousseau says here? Or is it not the peak? That is the question. Primarily he is absolutely right. Rousseau says so. Yes.

Student: Isn't there an important point that in this paragraph that we were reading just before "so long as they remained," Rousseau says, "this state is the true youth of the world"? In *Emile* he stresses the thing that you have to take youth seriously and realize that the state—

LS: Very good. So, in other words, in an older author, one could say, by using the term youth he means of course there is a maturity which is superior to youth. In the case of Rousseau, you cannot do it, because there is no teleology. So, I think, up to now, I am absolutely on the side of Mr. Fetscher.

Student: There is no teleology, but by saying youth he implies that there is a man which comes after.

LS: Yes, but this man may be inferior. You see, I know very little; and so I look up sometimes commentaries and I learned from a commentary that in earlier times—I don't quite believe it, but there must be something to it—people regarded the fall, the autumn, as the nicest time of the year. I myself always felt that way, but simply . . . primitive people, you know . . . the harvest is of course more satisfactory from every point of view than the sowing. That is a very unpoetic point of view, but a very intelligible point of view. And this commentator says¹⁰—referring to a book which I haven't read—this was a prevalent feeling in ancient times. Harvest festivals are much more than sheer spring festivals; and even in this country you get an idea of it very soon. In the eighteenth century, that is asserted, spring came to the fore; and of course all modern poetry, I think, is characterized by this feeling of spring. Now, spring clearly is not the harvest. So one could say spring has received such a good press for the same reason for which our century has been called the century of the child. Maturity is dull, from a certain point of view. Good. So, that is no argument. Up to now Fetscher is still right. Now, I try to demolish him, if I may; and I read to you first a statement from the *Social Contract*, Book 1, chapter 8, "On the Civil State." For understanding that, it is necessary to have clearly in mind that these savages lived in a pre-civil state; it is still a modification of the state of nature, in which they lived. Now, what does that have to do with this [inaudible] here?

This passage from the state of nature, or this transition from the state of nature, to the civil state produces in man a very remarkable change, by substituting in his conduct justice for instinct, and giving to his actions the morality which they lacked previously.

LS: This does not settle it, by any means; one could say, why not [think that] instincts [are] higher than justice?

Only then, when the voice of duty succeeds to the physical impulse and when right succeeds to appetite, man, who till then had only regarded himself, sees himself compelled to act on other principles, and to consult his reason before listening to his inclinations. Although he deprives himself, in this state, of many advantages which he holds from nature, he gains on the other hand¹¹ [such] great advantages, his faculties exercise themselves and develop themselves, his ideas extend themselves, his sentiments become more noble, his whole soul rises to that point, that, if the abuses of this new condition—" i.e. of the civil state "—did not degrade him frequently beneath that which he left—" i.e. the state of nature "—he would have to praise, to

bless unceasingly the moment which brought him out forever from the state of nature, and which, from a stupid and narrow animal, made him an intelligent being and a man.^{xxii}

In plain English, man in the state of nature is not fully a man, and hence these savage societies, the praise of savage society, cannot be the last word of Rousseau. Read the whole chapter; it is very short, less than one page. There is an indication to this effect, by the way, here in the Second Discourse. Where were we now, where you read this last? If you read at the end of the second paragraph following that, when he speaks of man misusing faculties which honor him, this is an allusion to what is more fully developed in the chapter of the Social Contract which I read to you. So, in other words, Rousseau's praise of the savages is only provisional; and I believe that this Fetscher himself admits later on. I do not find it now; it is not important.

But let us now again look at the context of this crucial passage regarding the savages. Do you have that, the key passage where he praises this society so much, which begins, "But one must observe?" Whoever has it. We have to read the second half of the preceding paragraph: "This precisely is the [state] at which were arrived"

Mr. Reinken: "This is precisely the state reached by most of the savage nations known to us: and it is for want of having made a proper distinction in our ideas, and seen how very far they already are from the state of nature, that so many writers have hastily concluded that man is naturally cruel, and requires civil institutions—"

LS: Because if you look at the savages, you see that cruelty: the scalping and tormenting of prisoners, and all the other interesting things. You have to consider that. Go on.

Mr. Reinken: "and requires civil institutions to make him more mild; whereas nothing is more gentle than man in his primitive state—"

LS: The primitive state is the pre-savage state where they are in isolation in the forests.

Mr. Reinken: "[as]¹² he is placed by nature at an equal distance from the stupidity of brutes, and the fatal ingenuity of civilized man. Equally confined by instinct and reason to the sole care of guarding himself against the mischiefs which threaten him, he is restrained by natural compassion from doing any injury to others, and is not led to do such a thing even in return for injuries received."^{xxiii}

LS: Stop here. Here is a praise of the pre-savage man which seems to be as high as the praise of savage men. The terms are not exactly the same; but what can be better than to be "an equal distance from the stupidity of brutes and the fatal enlightenment of civil man"—is not that what we all would like to have—and "limited by instinct and reason"? In other words, this primitive man is already an actually rational being. Now, this is flatly contradicted by the sequel: this praise of early man, of primitive man is flatly contradicted by the praise of the savage. Since we see from this that Rousseau can even in two subsequent paragraphs retract what he has most emphatically asserted, we cannot take the fact that Rousseau *does* state his praise of the

^{xxii} Rousseau, 1994, 141.

^{xxiii} *SD*, 170; 48.

savages—we cannot take this as demonstrably his view merely because he said it. Was this long sentence intelligible? I mean, here is a clear emphatic sentence in praise of the savage life. This is not contradicted clearly in the *Second Discourse*, that is true; but we see in the preceding paragraph another praise; not as high, that is true. I mean, he doesn't say here that the state of primitive man was the best for man, period; he does not say that. But the terms of the praise, that this early man, the primitive man was in the right mean between the stupidity of brutes and the unreasonable enlightenment of civilized men—in other words he was truly rational—¹³ is manifestly contradicted by the next paragraph, and by the book as a whole. Is my argument clear? We have to consider this context. I would say while Rousseau does not *say* in the first paragraph that primitive man is man in the best state, he suggests it. So it is not a contradiction in terms, but a contradiction in fact.

If we may then assume that the state of savages is not simply the best, we are also entitled to make another qualification. Let us grant to Rousseau for one moment that the state of the savages is the best for the species; then the later progress of the individual as distinguished from the species may not merely be an apparent progress. This is another point which indeed is of utmost importance to make. For Rousseau the maximum for the species, the maximum state for the species, is different from the maximum state for the individual; and that is absolutely crucial for Rousseau's whole thinking. It is by no means a paradoxical thought. It is rather commonsensical. Only the way in which Rousseau states it is highly paradoxical. Mr. Reinken.

Mr. Reinken: On the contradiction between the two paragraphs [inaudible]. Mr. Nicgorski said that there are two observed points; and Rousseau talks as if the initial point was this primitive state, but as Nicgorski said, indeed, the observed initial fact is the savage state, and the primitive state which precedes it is found entirely by reflection, not by observation.

LS: There is something to that; what you say is defensible. But it is also defensible to say, taking the argument of the *Second Discourse* as a whole, that the first state is, although inferred, nevertheless known through legitimate inference. When he says "two known facts," he doesn't say "two facts known by our sense experience." Legitimate inference, facts known by legitimate inference are also known.

Student: In the beginning, or at the end of the First Part, when he speaks of two known facts, it appears then that he is speaking of the primitive state as one of them.

LS: Yes, yes.

Student: But at the end of the *Second Discourse*, he talks about two observed, the two poles of his argument can actually be observed.^{xxiv}

LS: I don't remember that; but if he said that, you are right.

^{xxiv} The passages in question are at SD, 162, 42 ("two facts given as real") and 192, 66 ("What reflection teaches us on this subject, observation confirms perfectly: Savage man and Civilized man differ so much . . .").

Student: So I almost think that seems to be something of a contradiction or a revision to some extent of what he previously said, by substituting the savage state as one pole for the primitive state.

LS: Yes, that could very well be. I mean, I have overlooked this later passage. If he says it, then you are absolutely right. Yes?

Student: He does go out of his way to say that the savage state is observed; in fact most savages are in *this* savage state.

LS: Oh yes, there is no question that the savage state is observed, but the question is whether the primitive state is not known, if not by direct observation, at least by a legitimate inference. Yes, Mr. Butterworth.

Mr. Butterworth: I'm afraid I missed the train¹⁴ [of] your argument; when you were contrasting the last half of the paragraph which precedes the most happy epoch for man,^{xxv} were you saying that in the last half of the paragraph¹⁵ he was speaking of the individual, and in the next paragraph the species?

LS: No, no. You must not make things more complicated than they are. He speaks first—where is this incident?—he speaks first of what he calls somewhere “the state of pure nature”; and that is the man, the pre-social man, alone in the forest. And then he speaks of the savages; that is also a state of nature. Savages: the state of savagery is praised as the highest state, the youth of the world. That is a passage we have already discussed. Now, he does not use such extreme terms of praise when speaking of the first stage; but while not using such terms of praise, the description itself suggests the perfect state: an intelligent being in between the stupidity of the brutes and the misuse of reason in civilized society. What can you have more than that?

Now, I would like to give you some more evidence, and perhaps you will consider the passage at home. Towards the end of the first part of the *Discourse on Inequality*, the third paragraph before the end of the first part. Do you have that? We need only the latter half. “After having shown that the *perfectibility*,” etc. Yes?

Mr. Reinken: “I must now collect and consider the different accidents which may have improved the human understanding while depraving the species.”^{xxvi}

LS: Yes, stop here. That is the passage which I have in mind, “which might have perfected human [reason].”^{xxvii} You see, when Rousseau speaks here of the perfection of the species, that is the first formula he states it in: only an apparent progress of the individual, as distinguished from

^{xxv} It is a question, again, of the claim, in one paragraph of Part Two of the *Discourse*, that primitive man is at a kind of mean between stupidity and enlightenment and the claim, in the following paragraph, that a more advanced state than that is “best for man.” Strauss had not said, as the question implies, that one state is best for individuals and the other best for the species but rather that steps beyond the latter state may be better for individuals, though worse for the species.

^{xxvi} *SD*, 162; 42.

^{xxvii} Strauss corrects Cole's translation.

the species. Now, he uses a more precise term: the improvement of *reason*. The improvement of the species has a certain ceiling beyond which it cannot go on; and provisionally Rousseau says this ceiling has been achieved in savage society. Reason can go beyond that, and must go beyond that. But this is not yet better for the human species. He has formulated what he has in mind; because in many respects Rousseau's thoughts were of course not confused, but only the presentation is confusing. There may be an ultimate confusion; we must see that. But in this respect there is no confusion in his mind. I read to you again from the letter to the Archbishop of Paris [inaudible words] in the same edition, page 471:

These reflections led me to new investigations on the human mind considered in the state of civil society; and I found then that the development of enlightenment and of vices always takes place in the same proportion"—i.e. the men become merely degraded in proportion as they become enlightened—"not in the individuals, in the individuals, moral progress may go together with intellectual progress, but in the peoples"—the peoples become merely degraded by becoming enlightened; not the individuals—"a distinction which I have always carefully made, and which none of those who have attacked me has been able to understand."^{xxviii}

So, this hasn't changed since [the *Second Discourse*]. In mean, this book^{xxix}—I haven't finished it: I will give you a progress report when I am through—but hitherto I haven't seen that he has been aware of the [distinction between the best state for the species and the best state for individuals].

Now, what does he mean by that? Individualism again is a provisional expression. He means outstanding individuals, *outstanding* individuals. Very gifted individuals can as individuals reach a stage¹⁶ which peoples can never reach. Rousseau was a democrat in a sense, but he was not a simple egalitarian democrat. This, I think, must be made clear. I give you two more . . . let me first finish this argument; keep in mind what you . . . in addition I would say on the basis of mere argument, the quoting of passages, one would of course also have to consider the praise of Geneva in the Epistle Dedicatory of the *Second Discourse*, what he says there in praise of Geneva. I think that is, on the face of it, as high a praise of Geneva as the praise of savage society is a praise of savage society. I refer you especially to the first paragraph there.

The question is then, why does Rousseau make this praise, this ultimately untenable praise—from his own point of view untenable praise—of savage society in this passage? Now, there is first one reason which is, as I am going to state it first, an idiotic reason; but idiotism forms a part of scholarship. If you do not know that, you will learn it.

[END OF TAPE SIDE 1]

[Tape resumes in progress] **LS:** —no use, as can be demonstrated. Lucretius' poem, Book 5, where he describes such a development as Rousseau [describes], with interesting modifications; but scholars are always more interested in proving the borrowing—the cribbing, I hear, is the present day American term for that: c-r-i-b, is that correct?—and do not consider what they ought to consider also, the differences, which are usually much more enlightening. So, in

^{xxviii} Rousseau, 2001, 52.

^{xxix} It take it that Strauss refers again to the Fetscher book, which started him on the train of thought.

Lucretius you have this description, that pre-political, early society is a peak of the development of society. So, Rousseau simply imitates Lucretius. It is idiotic for this reason, because Lucretius must have had his reasons for saying so; but that these reasons should be identical with Rousseau's reason is of course a begging of the question. One must investigate first. In the case of Lucretius, to mention only one thing, it makes very much sense, because Epicureanism was very critical of political society as such. Epicureanism strictly speaking has no political philosophy. Their principle is *lathe biosas*: live in retirement. Do not lead a public life; do not lead a citizen life. But Rousseau was surely a political philosopher, so¹⁷ [he] cannot have the same reason. I said before that this praise of savage society is an indirect expression of his break with Christianity. It is one way of saying that¹⁸ these pagan societies were much superior to the European societies, to the Christian societies. That, I think, is a good point; but it is not sufficient, because for this purpose it would have been perfectly sufficient to praise *Rome*, pagan Rome, which he praises always so highly. In our assignment of today there is Cato's praise, as the greatest of all men—do you remember that?—a praise repeated by Rousseau in other writings of his. Cato: surely a great man.

So, in other words, this motive, while true, does not explain the preference given to savages: it would have been satisfied by the preference given to pagan Rome. I suggest the following explanation, which is complicated, but I believe it is less complicated than the mere text of Rousseau; and to that extent, I beg you to listen. He starts from the goodness of the primitive state—you know, the primitive state, the absolutely pre-social man; not only pre-political, but also pre-social. In praising this first state, he imitates as it were the Biblical view, perfect beginnings: man as he came from the hands of his Creator was perfect. By praising the savages, the later state, he retracts his praise of the beginnings, obviously. Still, this progress from the early man to the savage could be understood as a development of the faculties, and therefore as a providential development. So God did not create man perfect, but he created him so that he could become perfect by his use and development of his faculties. This would be confirmed by the fact that there is a kind of fall after the savages, if you take this literally; a kind of fall, I mean with the coming of all [our] culture. But this *kind* of fall again makes possible the true development of our faculties, which had not yet taken place in this early society. And above all it is not strictly speaking a fall, but an accidental mechanical causation as a whole process from the very beginning. Rousseau retracts, in other words—that is my suggestion—by the first step, the real theology, the teaching of the Bible; and by the second argument he retracts the argument taken from a natural theology as it was emerging in Rousseau's time. This would seem to dispose of this difficulty.

Now, let us go on because we have still to cover [a] large ground. Yes, this question of rights; this is important. This last¹⁹ [stage] of the state of nature. Where is that, the passage which we have read before; you have this still, Mr. Reinken? About where he begins with metallurgy and agriculture. The next paragraph, beginning, "From the culture of the lands which followed necessarily their division, and from property once recognized, the first rules of justice." Do you have that?

Mr. Reinken: "The cultivation of the earth necessarily brought about its distribution; and property, once recognized, gave rise to the first rules of justice; for, to secure each man his own, it had to be possible for each to have something. Besides, as men began to look forward to the

future, and all had something to lose, every one had reason to apprehend that reprisals would follow any injury he might do to another. This origin is so much the more natural, as it is impossible to conceive how property can come from anything but manual labor: for what else can a man add to things which he does not originally create, so as to make them his own property? It is the husbandman's labor alone that, giving him a title to the produce of the ground he has tilled, gives him a claim also to the land itself, at least till harvest; and so, from year to year, a constant possession which is easily transformed into property. When the ancients, says Grotius, gave to Ceres the title of *Legislatrix*, and to a festival celebrated in her honor the name of *Thesmophoria*, they meant by that that the distribution of lands had produced a new kind of right: that is to say, the right of property, which is different from the right deducible from the law of nature.^{xxx}

LS: Yes, that is very important. That of course will be explained later. The only title to property, natural title to property, is labor. Have you ever heard of this before?

Student: Locke.

LS: Locke, sure; Locke's thesis. Rousseau accepts it, but he qualifies it in an interesting way by the remark, "at least until the next harvest." Strictly speaking by tilling the soil you cannot acquire the right to sempiternal possession of that lot; only until the next harvest. This is a new sort of right, as Rousseau says, private property, different from that which results from the natural law. What does the natural law provide? That was stated before by him, in the first paragraph of this part, when he speaks [of the fruits of the Earth]; these are all common to all men. No private property, that is the natural law. The division arises from a new right; and now Rousseau develops in the sequel the bad moral consequences of that. We will disregard that, and turn to the further What happens? Land is appropriated. But not equally to all: some will not get anything, because they come too late and the land is already staked out by the others. These are then the poor; the haves and the have-nots; and there is conflict. Let us read that. That's five paragraphs after the one we read.

Mr. Reinken: "Thus, as the most powerful or the most miserable considered their might or misery as a kind of right to the possessions of others—"

LS: No, not misery: "considering their powers or their needs a kind of right to what belongs to others."

Mr. Reinken: "a kind of right to the possessions of others, equivalent, in their opinion, to that of property, the destruction of equality was attended by the most terrible disorders. Usurpations by the rich, robbery by the poor, and the unbridled passions of both, suppressed the cries of natural compassion and the still feeble voice of justice, and filled men with avarice, ambition and vice. Between the title of the strongest and that of the first occupier, there arose perpetual conflicts, which never ended but in battles and bloodshed."^{xxxi}

^{xxx} *SD*, 173-74; 50-51

^{xxxi} *SD*, 176; 52.

LS: Now. What is the legal description of the situation prior to the establishment of civil society? We have the right to property, based on labor, the most honest title imaginable. But this division of land takes place in a non-legal manner. Not illegal, but non-legal. Everyone grabs a piece of land, and then quite a few remain without it. The others, the owners, have acquired it honestly. They have tilled the soil and [inaudible] the forests, and whatnot; and the others are out.

What is the status of the others? Well, they can work for the owners. But maybe there are too many, or maybe the owners have large families and many children who can do most of the work. What is the status of the poor? You see, these are the primary reasons which in a fully developed form lead of course to something like Communism, and therefore it is interesting to study them. What is the legal status of the have-nots? That is the question.

Student: They are evidently criminals; they are trying to—

LS: Yes, sure; but that is a question, whether they are criminals in that state. There is not yet a law; there is only natural right. What does natural right entitle you to?

Student: Enough; a sufficiency.

LS: Self-preservation. So if they can't get it by begging. . . . Let us assume the whole land is distributed; there are no longer any bananas around which you can pick which do not belong to anyone, or acorns for that matter. And they beg; the owners don't give them. What is the situation? They may of course grab it by force; and therefore the formula, when he says here, "making from their forces *or their needs* a kind of right to what belongs to another." But Rousseau means this: if this poor fellow, starving, is very weak physically, then his whole natural right of self-preservation is of no use whatever. So, the effective right countering the right of property is the right of the stronger. And the right of the stronger is here defined²⁰ [as] a right because its basis is the right of self-preservation. This is, I think, the legal situation as he describes it. And by the way, we understand from here this remark we have described last time, Rousseau's change of the sublime moral rule, [his] substitution for the sublime moral rule of a pedestrian but more useful rule, as he put it: pursue your own good with the least harm to others. Harm you will; but don't harm anyone unnecessarily. And that is what these poor fellows are doing. You see also that it is a morally unbearable situation, where two titles which are equally good contradict each other all the time. We need a situation where we have a single rule, a non-contradictory rule.

Now, what happens then? Then the contract. What is the contract?²¹ Property will [now] be recognized by all, the haves and the have-nots; and therefore what was hitherto a mere natural right based on work, on labor, is now a social right based on universal agreement.

Student: This does not differ from Locke at all.

LS: No, no. Only, the things which Locke in his very great delicacy soft-pedaled are set forth with some toughness by Rousseau.

Student: In Locke I have the feeling that as soon as someone picks up an acorn from the ground [inaudible], and therefore by picking it up, adds his labor to it,²² it becomes his property. Somehow you don't feel that that acorn is property in Rousseau.

LS: Oh, sure, that is implied. But it becomes truly property in Rousseau *only* by being swallowed. Because once it has passed this point beyond return, then it is appropriated. That is developed by²³ [Rousseau] with great clarity. But in Locke it is exactly the same situation: self-preservation entitles you to appropriate, and the right kind of appropriation is by your labor, not by taking it away from others. But if there is a famine, if there is scarcity, what is going to happen then? Then, according to Locke, although he doesn't stress it, but he indicates it, of course²⁴ [one] takes it away from others. Only if his self-preservation does not come into competition, or however he puts it, with that of someone else [must he preserve the rest of mankind].^{xxxii}

Now what happens? All property is now legalized by a contract, by social law. But what does this mean? It means it is a fraud. Property is bad; the formula of a pupil of Rousseau, Balbert^{xxxiii} in the French Revolution, who was executed by Robespierre for that. You know, that was the left wing from which the socialists later came. The principle is here: that was a usurpation, an inevitable . . . because, I mean, people had to live. So they usurped a part of the earth. I mean, they were entitled to do so. But everyone was equally entitled to say, "I'm going to till this piece of land; I'm going to invest the labor." The question is not that labor is the legal title, but the question is: who may apply his labor to what? You cannot labor without material. You must have the material first, and this is truly the first act of appropriation. So, the conflict is inevitable, and the whole act, according to Rousseau's description here, is a clever, shrewd act on the part of the rich to keep the poor from taking away what belongs to them. The connection with Marxism is quite obvious. Rousseau will try to modify . . . that is one point why he wrote the *Social Contract*.²⁵ A fundamental injustice had been committed at the beginning of civil society.

Now we understand that better, after having seen what happened, [what] came from private property. There came such iniquities, as they were in Rousseau's eyes, as the feudal order, primogeniture, and whatever else. Now we know that; and now we are going to suggest at least the principles of a just society; and that we will do in the *Social Contract*, but still with the understanding—which is made clear in the *Social Contract*; it is very clear in the *Emile*—that law necessarily favors the rich. This cannot be different because law must protect property. Hence it protects more those who have property than those who have not, and it protects more those who have much property than those who have less. So, in the words of Anatole France, the

^{xxxii} *Second Treatise*, Chapter 2, S 4.

^{xxxiii} The transcriber puts a question marks next to the name, and it's not clear to whom Strauss refers. Babeuf (1760-97), whose radical views on private property and references to Rousseau make him a good candidate, was executed almost three years after Robespierre's execution. Brissot (1754-93) has in his favor that he once stated that exclusive property was robbery and that he was executed by Robespierre. But by that time, he was a "moderate," and his execution had nothing to do with his understanding of property. Jacques Hébert (1757-94) has in his favor that his name sounds a bit like Balbert, that he was executed by Robespierre and that he stood to Robespierre's left. But it is a stretch, in a way that it is not for Brissot or Babeuf, to describe Hébert as a student of Rousseau.

law forbids with equal severity the rich and the poor to sleep under bridges and . . . what was the other?

Student: Steal bread.^{xxxiv}

LS: Steal bread. And Rousseau admitted that as absolutely necessary and legitimate, but as something at which he shudders. Rousseau was *not* a socialist, of course; but the basic arguments would be used by socialists later.

Then he develops in the sequel a brief political doctrine proper. To repeat the Lockean point: property of a sort precedes civil society, and society is established for the protection of that property. But what is the character of civil society, as distinguished from property? And the answer is: a contract. That is the only legitimate way in which a civil society can be founded. The alternatives would be force or fraud which cannot be titles, legitimate titles. And paternal authority can never give rise to political authority, as Rousseau says, following in the first place Locke but also in a way Aristotle. But in this discussion—may I make only one point?—what he says here is not the teaching of the *Social Contract*. He makes it perfectly clear that the statement here is entirely provisional, and it is based on a doctrine of a dual contract which Rousseau rejects. The doctrine is briefly this: this was the older version of the contract published also, political contract teaching—not very old (I think it was created by a man called Salamonius, a Spanish writer, somewhere in the sixteenth century).^{xxxv} The book by Mr. Gough (if that is the right pronunciation; I have heard both versions) on the social contract is quite useful for this question.^{xxxvi} This was developed then.

This doctrine then was also the official teaching in Rousseau's time on the basis of Pufendorf and other writers, and Burlamaqui [inaudible].^{xxxvii} There is first a contract of union, by which the society is established, the social contract proper. Then there comes the contract of subjection, by virtue of which the people establishes a government. There is a mutual contract between the government—say the prince—and the people, which of course has a great difficulty because there is no one to judge in case of conflict. I mean, there is no Supreme Court, in other words, which settles all conflict between the executive and the legislative. The difficulties which this creates—because there are two powers, the people and the government, [inaudible] the prince—induce this great lover of order and peace, Thomas Hobbes, to say there is only a single contract. The social contract is identical with the contract of subjection. People cannot unite into a society meaningfully without subjecting themselves to a government. The social contract is a contract of the individuals in favor of a third, the prince. They say among themselves, we contract among each other to be subject to that man, and his family, or whatever it may be. Rousseau is of course a lover not only of peace, but also of liberty, and therefore he cannot accept the Hobbean solution. But he accepts the principle of the Hobbean solution: only one contract.

^{xxxiv} “The law in its majestic equality forbids the rich as well as the poor to sleep under bridges, to beg in the streets, and to steal bread.” Anatole France (1844-1924) won the Nobel Prize in Literature in 1921. The quotation is from his novel, *The Red Lily* (1894).

^{xxxv} Mario Salamonius (c. 1450-1532) was the author of *De Principatu* (1544).

^{xxxvi} J.W. Gough, *The Social Contract: A Critical Study of Its Development* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1936).

^{xxxvii} Jean Jacques Burlamaqui (1694-1748). Swiss political theorist, author of *Principles of Natural Right* (1747).

The social contract is a contract of subjection. But to whom? Answer: to the people. The individuals surrender all their power to the society. The relation between government and people is not a contractual relation. The people delegate unilaterally the necessary power to the government, and the governors simply become commissioners, commissioned by the people, and have no contractual right, except in a [inaudible] and technical sense, regarding pensions and civil service, and so on. But surely, no political power. By the way, Locke does, without saying so, exactly the same thing. But Locke doesn't emphasize it. Locke has also the single contract.

Student: Don't you think that the principle [inaudible] that there can be no meaningful union without some sort of subjection is probably more consistent with classical political philosophy than the solution posed by the dual contract position?

LS: Yes, sure, but in the classical doctrine, they did not contract, were not contractual. Yes, unity of [inaudible]. By the way, if I may dispose of this [inaudible], Rousseau is sometimes called a totalitarian. In one sense that is true. But in the sense in which it is ordinarily meant today it is absolutely wrong. Because totalitarianism as it is understood today means of course totalitarianism of government, and to this Rousseau was absolutely opposed. What he said in effect can be called totalitarianism of society, of the people, but not of the government. The government must remain effectively responsible to the citizen body or else it loses its legitimacy by this very fact. Whether this is sufficient is an entirely different question, but this difference must never be forgotten.

In other words, one can say Rousseau did not sufficiently protect society against despotism of the democratic majority. That is a legitimate criticism. But if the majority would establish a government which is no longer effectively responsible to the citizen body, the majority acts illegally; and the minority which would prevent it has at least as much right to revolution as the majority [inaudible]. Someone wanted to ask a question.

Student: You say that Rousseau rejected Hobbes because he loved liberty, but why doesn't he reject Locke?

LS: He does so, but here is not the place for that. That he does in the *Social Contract*. He rejects the whole British system—which he of course preferred to absolute monarchy—because it is representative government. This argument, repeated time and again up to our days, against the fact that there are politicians who develop an interest of their own different from the interest of the people—therefore referenda, therefore Gallup polls, and what have you, to keep the representatives in due subjection to the will of the people—that is the Rousseauan line very roughly. You have heard of this kind of development, I take it. Direct democracy, that is Rousseau's demand, and not representative. That is the reason [he rejects Locke].

But by the way, [one must not do Rousseau an injustice]²⁶; he was of course free from the follies of the simplistic²⁷ [populists]: he knew the government must have very great powers of its own. For example, the power of war and peace is entirely with the government, but the legislative power is in the hands of the town meeting, not in the hands of the representatives. But within the law, the government must have a very great power; otherwise it can't take care of the interests of

the people. For example, if in 1945 an American President would have said—although 90 percent of the American people said “bring the boys back”—would have said “no, I do not bring the boys back, because I have to send them away five years later under much more unfavorable conditions,” then he would have acted according to Rousseau’s principles, although not according to the principles of a simplistic understanding of democracy. Yes.

Student: What if it is more than a majority, where it’s a general will that delegates or donates the power of a citizen body to the government?

LS: Impossible; it is absolutely illegal. It has no power to do so. In order to be legitimate, a government must not take away from *any* man the power of having a say in legislation; therefore the sovereignty of the legislative body must be preserved. The exclusion of anyone, not based on precedent, general law, is an act of tyranny.

Student: But if they all exclude themselves—

LS: Stupidity does not make right, as Rousseau says. A stupid act, an idiotic act, does not make right. In the strict theoretical construction the argument runs as follows: right of self-preservation as in Hobbes and Locke; the right of self-preservation is meaningless if it doesn’t include the right to the means of self-preservation, for example, of that stick or that gun or that whatever I need to defend myself. The right to the means of self-preservation includes, according to Hobbes, the right to be the sole judge of what are the right means to my self-preservation. I may be a very great fool and therefore pick invariably the wrong means, but I have a much greater interest in my self-preservation than the greatest sage has in *my* self-preservation. Hobbes is willing to take that risk, that incompetent people remain the judges of the means of self-preservation, because he says it is in safer hands: they have surely a very powerful interest in their self-preservation. But then Hobbes goes on and says: “well, but this right of everyone to be the sole judge leads to war of everybody against everybody; and therefore [there is] the need of strong government, transfer of all power to the Leviathan, to the sovereign.”

Now, Rousseau’s change is this: he says, “what you say, Hobbes, leads to the consequence which is undeniable, that you can no longer make a distinction between tyrannical and non-tyrannical government.”^{xxxviii} That is absolutely true. The duty of obedience in Hobbes extends to any Nero, and what Hobbes says in defense of it is rather weak. He says: “if you don’t live at the court of Rome and are not a courtier, or something of this kind, you will not have anything to fear; if you live outside in the provinces in a small farm, Nero doesn’t worry about you.”^{xxxix} This has a certain crude element of truth, but it is obviously insufficient. We must have a doctrine which will permit us to distinguish clearly between tyrannical and non-tyrannical government—that Rousseau admits, and emphasizes—and how can we do it? Rousseau says: “this right of myself to remain, to be the judge of the means conducive to my self-preservation must be preserved.” How can it be preserved? Answer: everyone becomes a member of the sovereign body. The public judgment on the right means of self-preservation are called “the laws.” The law tells you which means to self-preservation are called “the laws.” The law tells you which means to self-preservation are permissible and which are not. I remain still a judge if I

^{xxxviii} See Rousseau, 1994, 5.2-3, pp. 132-34.

^{xxxix} Hobbes, 1998, 120.

am a member of the sovereign, if my vote counts as much as that of anybody else's. That this is not sufficient is obvious; but as a primary statement it makes sense to say that no one has to fear being tyrannized if he has the freedom, not only to vote, but also to speak in the assembly against the law which he regards as iniquitous. Surely it is not sufficient, and all the real difficulties arise from these insufficiencies; and that is developed with great clarity. Also, the defects are developed with great clarity and honesty in the *Social Contract*; that, one must say. We will get a specimen of it at the end of the *Emile* when he gives a summary of the argument of the *Social Contract*.

There is another passage which we should read; when he says, "Such was, or must have been the origin of society and of laws."

Mr. Reinken: "Such was, or may well have been, the origin of society and law, which bound new fetters on the poor, and gave new powers to the rich; which irretrievably destroyed natural liberty, eternally fixed the law of property and inequality, converted clever usurpation into unalterable right, and, for the advantage of a few ambitious individuals, subjected all mankind to perpetual labor, slavery and wretchedness. It is easy to see how the establishment of one community made that of all the rest necessary, and how, in order to make head against united forces, the rest of mankind had to unite in turn. Societies soon multiplied and spread over the face of the earth, till hardly a corner of the world was left in which a man could escape the yoke—"

LS: No; "hardly" is a weakening word which doesn't exist in the French. "It was no longer possible."

Student: "and withdraw his head from beneath the sword which he saw perpetually hanging over him by a thread. Civil right having thus become the common rule among the members of each community, the law of nature maintained its place only between different communities—"^{xl}

LS: Stop here a moment. That is the key point which is implied in what I said before. In Rousseau's view, as already in Hobbes's view, there is a natural right, a natural law, but it becomes completely absorbed by civil law. The natural law doctrine of Hobbes leads to this ultimate conclusion: obey the government whatever the government may be. This takes precedence over all of the other laws of nature. In Rousseau it is somewhat different. Rousseau says: "in a well-constituted society, in a society constituted according to natural law, the appeal to natural law is no longer necessary or possible. As a member of a republican free society of the kind described, you have no right and no possibility to appeal from the people to a higher law, because that society is established according to the higher law. The motive for these changes was this: the appeal to higher law is always a difficult thing. Arbitrariness cannot be legally avoided. Obviously, someone may appeal to higher law without having a cause of it. If you have some authority within civil society which administers the higher law, for example the Supreme Court,²⁸ that is again then an institution of positive right, with its own laws of procedure, and no one can dare say that every holding or even every decision of the Supreme Court is surely the highest piece of justice possible; no one can say that. Therefore, if it is possible to find a substitute for the trans-legal appeal to a higher law, it would be wonderful, and that is what

^{xl} *SD*, 178; 54.

Rousseau is trying to do. Natural law becomes absorbed by the positive law of a properly constituted society. This was one of the major practical reasons why natural law ceased to be of the practical importance which it had at the time. The legal positivism of the nineteenth century is in one way or the other Rousseauian. The state, as it came to be called especially in German political and legal philosophy, makes impossible and unnecessary the appeal from the state to a higher law.

Student: That is a subtle difference in a way from the medieval description of the constituted state in accord with natural law.

LS: Yes, but the crucial point is the appeal: appeal from positive law to a higher law, natural law, [is] legally possible [in that older description]. The net result of Rousseau and everything connected with it is, no; it is not morally possible. But it is also no longer necessary; that was the comfort.

Student: Isn't it whether it is the well-constituted state; isn't that the crucial question?

LS: Surely. Rousseau said a well-constituted society is a society in which the law rules; the law, i.e. there is no magistrate whose functions are not defined by law, and he becomes simply a criminal by [departing from those functions]. So, rule of law. And what does rule of law mean? That every man subject to the law has had the opportunity of having a say in the making of the law. Simply stated: one man, one vote. That is not quite literally what Rousseau says, but that is a simple [inaudible]. So, you have here a vote.

Secondly, the law must be general. There cannot be a law, a *law*, which says, say, "Mr. Mueller will be deprived of his property." Mr. Mueller can be deprived of his property only on the basis of a general law, under which he falls; and this general law will then—that is Rousseau's hope—always be of such a nature that it can never be merely Mr. Mueller who will be deprived, but other people who will also. The fact that the law in general in its source *and* general in its stipulations is, according to Rousseau's statement of the *Social Contract*, the necessary and sufficient condition of legitimate legality, and therefore you have no right to complain. That individual injustices in decisions of lawcourts may occur, there is no guarantee against that in any society. But the principle, that was the point.

But we have to read on. I hope you left a finger where we were, Mr. Reinken. "The natural law has its base only among the different societies, where, under the name of international law . . ."

Mr. Reinken: "it was qualified by certain tacit conventions, in order to make commerce practicable, and serve as a substitute for natural compassion, which lost, when applied to societies, almost all the influence it had over individuals, and survived no longer except in some great cosmopolitan spirits, who, breaking down the imaginary barriers that separate different peoples, follow the example of our Sovereign Creator, and include the whole human race in their benevolence."^{xli}

^{xli} *SD*, 178; 54.

LS: So, what does it mean? Even if you have here this legitimate society defined, then you still have a terrible problem which cannot be solved, and that is that every civil society is a particular society, closed off from other particular societies. There will be boundaries, well-armed, and what-not. They don't have to be iron curtains, but there will be boundaries all right, and therefore there will be wars. There will be something like international law; but international law is the same as natural law, as he put it—Hobbes's thesis again, literally—but this is of course of no great effect because there is no competent judge to decide between two sovereigns; and then it will be the god of battle who will decide controversial issues between them. Humanity simply for man as man will be subordinated absolutely by the large majority of men to patriotism, to the absolutization of their own society; and only some, as he puts it, some great cosmopolitan souls will go beyond these imaginary barriers, meaning barriers established by convention, by that convention which in each case establishes this particular society. And if you say that is a militant application of the social contract, then you say some accidents of history by virtue of which this part of the globe belongs to this state and others. . . . How frequently this depends on the marriages of princes and peace treaties and what-not, I don't have to belabor that.^{xlii}

There is a paragraph to which I must draw your attention; we cannot read that any more. It is a paragraph beginning five pages or so later: "In continuing thus to examine the facts by right," and so on.^{xliii} There is a long discussion of freedom again. The net result can be stated as follows: freedom is something higher than self-preservation—it is not stated this way, but that is the meaning. There is an obvious link-up between this praise of freedom in the political sense with the reference to freedom when he spoke of the definition of man. The links are very obscure, but the fact is undeniable; and it is one of the secrets of modern democratic "ideology" that these two very different meanings of freedom shift into each other. That, if one can say so, the metaphysical freedom of man is adduced as an argument in favor of political freedom, which to many of our contemporaries seems to be absolutely self-evident, but which looked at more closely is *not* self-evident. But Rousseau has very much to do with this, without any question. This paragraph I think you should read. There is also a remark from which it appears that Rousseau prefers democracy, as that state of civil society closest to the state of nature,^{xliv} which also should be mentioned.

There is so much more, and I look from the book at the watch, and from the watch at the book. There is only one point which I would like to mention briefly. About three pages before the end, the paragraph beginning, "If this were the place to enter into details, I would easily explain how," and so on. Read in the middle of that paragraph, please. "I would observe how this universal desire for reputation, honors and preferences"

Mr. Reinken: "I could explain how much this universal desire for reputation, honors and advancement, which inflames us all, exercises and holds up to comparison our faculties and powers; how it excites and multiplies our passions, and, by creating universal competition and rivalry, or rather enmity, among men, occasions numberless failures, successes and disturbances of all kinds by making so many aspirants run the same course. I could show that it is to this

^{xlii} I take it that Strauss's unfinished thought is that patriotism founded on the social contract is less rather than more subject to criticism than other more arbitrary varieties of patriotism. [Ed.]

^{xliii} *SD*, 182-83; 58-59.

^{xliv} *SD*, 186; 61,

desire of being talked about, and this unremitting rage of distinguishing ourselves, that we owe the best and the worst things we possess, both our virtues and our vices, our science and our errors, our conquerors and our philosophers; that is to say, a great many bad things, and a very few good ones.”^{xlv}

LS: Let us stop here. In other words, Rousseau says here (that can hardly be exaggerated to point that out) that our virtues are also due to the desire for distinction or for glory and honor—the vices too, that is obvious, but also the virtues. The motor, as it were, in virtue is the desire for this distinction. He says also here—that didn’t come out in the translation—“this furor to distinguish oneself, which holds us *almost always* outside of ourself,” i.e. not always. The man who is concerned with distinction does not have to be—how do they say?—other-directed. He can very well be self-directed. I ask you to keep this in mind, that here is a defense, so to speak, of glory, which seems to contradict the bulk of Rousseau’s work, and especially the *Emile*. Rousseau’s description of this other-directed man, as he is now called, is very powerful and I think of the greatest importance, not only theoretically, or academically, because these notions of the alienated man, and so forth, all stem from here, but because in our society this phenomenon apparently plays a much greater role than in former societies.

I mention only one point from the academic discussion which I find so very revealing, and that is the term *role*, as used in present-day psychology. Role, r-o-l-e, which is used all the time, you know. When you look at announcements of lectures here, for example, you find that. I mean, for example, a man has a role of a father, role of a taxpayer, the role. We are all actors, that is implied. We act all the time. We are play-acting our whole lives. But if someone has a certain interest in his child, takes care of it and so on, spans it, or whatever it may be, this is not acting a role, but *being* a father. And other things. That everything is tinged by this notion of play-acting is an absolutely terrible phenomenon today; and the merits of the value-free social science is that this value-free use of these terms, like role, prevents absolutely a reflection on their implication, namely that by using role in the sense of the psychologists, you say [that] there is nothing bad with doing nothing but play-acting through your life. That is the implication. But this is a very tough value judgment, which—the least I would say—should be examined. But it cannot be examined, because we are told by the methodologists these are value-free terms which mean nothing except as they define it, which is of course never true, because the definition cannot kill the connotations which it inevitably has and which are carried over from ordinary understanding into scientific understanding, whatever the methodologists may say. So, that was a long sermon. Next time we will read the first part of the *Emile*.

END OF LECTURE

¹ Deleted “and.”

² Deleted “that.”

³ Deleted “harming.”

⁴ Deleted “in saying that.”

^{xlv} SD, 188-89; 63.

⁵ Deleted “here.”

⁶ Deleted “in.”

⁷ Deleted “it.”

⁸ Deleted “his.”

⁹ Deleted “is.”

¹⁰ Deleted redundant “this was.”

¹¹ Deleted “so.”

¹² Changed from “and.”

¹³ Deleted “which.”

¹⁴ Deleted “on.”

¹⁵ Deleted “he is saying.”

¹⁶ Deleted “in.”

¹⁷ Deleted “this.”

¹⁸ Deleted “a pagan society.”

¹⁹ Deleted “state.”

²⁰ Deleted “is.”

²¹ Deleted “There will be now.”

²² Deleted “and.”

²³ Deleted “Locke.”

²⁴ Deleted “he.”

²⁵ Deleted “Something.”

²⁶ Changed from “Rousseau . . . one must not do him injustice.

²⁷ Deleted “popularists.”

²⁸ Deleted “but.”

Session 5

[In progress] **LS:** —with which Rousseau begins may only be an initial assertion. In other words, the *Emile* may serve the function to overcome that [inaudible]; we have surely to consider that. The second point which you made is that in a way the *Emile* deals, just as the *Second Discourse*, with the genesis of reason, only here not in the species, but in the individual. Now this of course compels us to raise a further question, since this question of man's becoming reasonable is ambiguous: does he acquire reason, or is the faculty of reason only actualized? Rousseau speaks all the time here of faculties, and we have therefore to keep in mind this question which we discussed when speaking of the *Second Discourse*: is this only a conventional and convenient way of expressing himself, or does Rousseau still believe that there are faculties proper? This much about your paper.ⁱ

But first I have to answer your question. You say you are not clear how Rousseau's apparent attributing of reason to primitive man squares with his earlier denial of understanding in natural man, and for the latter you refer to the first part of the *Discourse*. Obvious. Where does he attribute reason to primitive man?

Mr. Lane: On page 242.ⁱⁱ

LS: I don't have this text here.

Mr. Lane: In that paragraph before [in] which he said the savage state was the best. We read it in class. He said "nothing is more gentle than man in his primitive state, as he is placed by nature at an equal distance from the stupidity of brutes, and the fatal ingenuity of civilized man."ⁱⁱⁱ

LS: Oh yes, we discussed that.

Mr. Lane: Yes; and I don't see how this squares with the earlier quotation.

LS: It doesn't. Surely it is a flat contradiction, but I tried to explain it. That is in the context of a whole web of contradictions of which I spoke last time. The most immediate contradiction is: this statement implies that man's earliest state is the best; and half a page later he says the state of the savage is the best. I tried to explain that; I cannot repeat that now, but we will come across equivalent problems, and our method of procedure is the same. Mr. Mueller?

Mr. Mueller: About the savage state, doesn't he say "who would want to leave it?" Doesn't that necessarily mean that—

LS: The early men, the primitive men, also didn't wish to leave it. But some accidents happened which drove [them] out of this paradise of stupidity.

ⁱ Mr. Lane's seminar paper, which is not recorded.

ⁱⁱ Of the Cole.

ⁱⁱⁱ *SD*, 170; 48.

Student: But looking back filled with nostalgia would not be the same as saying “it is the best.” [Inaudible]. Perhaps the question doesn’t mean anything since the process of leaving it is in some way necessary; accidental, but necessary.

LS: Yes, but still, even if it is so, it could still be important for the following reason: that we must try to approximate it as much as possible on the present level; and to some extent that is exactly what Rousseau means. Our education, our civil society, our economics should be as close an approximation to the state of nature as possible. We will come to that.

But let me begin with a more general remark: may I mention the fact that by some strange accident we read the *Emile* just 200 years after it was published? I am quite surprised that there are no celebrations. Oh yes, there is one in Ohio State, I remember; they have a celebration of Rousseau. Because both the *Emile* and the *Social Contract*, his most famous works, appeared in the same year. This is of course entirely irrelevant, but we must sometimes also be so reasonable [as] to say irrelevancies.

Now, the difficulties which Mr. Lane had I suppose quite a few of you will also have—surely I had it more than once; I had it again this weekend when I was reading Rousseau—that one simply becomes impatient about these terrible contradictions. Although he has a long note about the inevitability of contradictions in the second part somewhere^{iv}, these contradictions¹ are only due to the fact that you cannot say all the things at the same time (i.e. you have to use loose language frequently in order to get something across, and this leads to contradictions with what you say in strict language. This is not the difficulty. But in such a case I think it is good not to throw the book away, but rather make clear to oneself what the substantive difficulties are.

Now, especially in the *Emile*, but also in the other writings, one thing is writ large, and Rousseau is very famous for this: nature is good. But that must be properly understood, because Aristotle too would say [that] nature is good. What does it mean here? “Nature is good” means reason is bad; it means society is bad—this is one key point of Rousseau’s teaching—and therefore when Rousseau says “man is by nature good,” that is nothing peculiar to man. Everything natural is good, but the case of man is of course the most interesting.

The second element in Rousseau which strikes every reader is his enthusiasm for democracy, let us say, for political liberty and equality. He is filled with political passion; and this is clearly in contradiction with the first item, “nature is good, society, i.e. also democratic society, is bad.” His enthusiasm for the people against any ruling strata, that is the second point. These are very rhetorically presented us, you know, and therefore frequently confusing.

Therefore there is a third element which is not rhetorically presented, also not so frequently stated, but which gives us for this very reason perhaps a better entrance into Rousseau’s thought, and this is his agreement in principle with Hobbes. Regarding the fundamental issues of natural law, he agrees with Hobbes against the tradition. This is the third point, and I myself find that if I start from that I can find my bearings in his thought.

^{iv} *Emile* (E), 345; 243. *Emile* is in Volume 4 of the *Oeuvres Complètes*. The English translation is the Kelly-Bloom (see note 72).

Then there is a fourth point to which he refers frequently, and especially also in the *Second Discourse* and in the *Emile*, and that is the incompatibility of the perfection of the individual with the perfection of the species, of society, of the people, however he calls it. These four were the massive chunks, and if one has understood their relation one can say one has understood Rousseau.

But I believe it is possible to get a unitary view of Rousseau. It is possible, and I will also say this general view has been confirmed again by my present reading. But I must of course substantiate it. At any rate, prior to any investigation one could say this: it must be possible, starting from any of these four items, to deduce from it, as it were, the three other items. Then one understands the inner connection; and if one has done that, then one has understood Rousseau. But that is not easy, and especially when one reads him for the first time; then one cannot but be extremely bewildered. But there is also one thing as a corrective to that. Sit back; don't put too strong an emphasis on each individual passage, but follow the over-all impression. I think that is Mr. Lane's defect, that he did not do that. For example, the over-all impression [concerning] natural man, [that there should be] as little interference with nature as possible. Education must be negative, as he puts it later on. This is a picture which goes throughout the book; the child should develop by himself. This is not altogether possible; there are some interferences necessary, but this interference is marginal. It is—one can use a very good word for that—laissez-faire. It is a strict parallel to Adam Smith's—no intervention in the economic things; also the invisible hand² works it. You know, no visible hand of the human governor can do you any good; the same in education.

Now, I do not wish to try to make such a deduction of the three other items from any of the four. I think we should turn first to the *Emile* and see what we can understand. [Inaudible]. Is that settled? But it was good that you raised the question, because I had overlooked this particular contradiction. But you find on almost every page something which contradicts something he says elsewhere, and one has gradually to acquire a sense of what is. . . . I mean, superficially there are, say, a million contradictions. But when you reflect a bit about it, you see there is a small number of contradictions which recur time and again, say five. I believe one can reduce it to four. Then the question becomes immediately more limited; four contradictions are more easy to solve than a million. And then you have to think about that.

Let us first turn in our usual way to the text. We don't have to say much about the Preface. He says on page one, paragraph three, his procedure follows the way of nature, "*la marche de la nature*," how nature marches.^v Generally speaking, he says here what he says of all previous political philosophers in the *Second Discourse*: they all had sought natural man, but they have painted civil man. Similarly all education hitherto was not an education of natural man, but already of a man defaced by society. He speaks in the Preface of the fact that here he will discuss how man as man is to be educated, and that means, of course,³ man at any time, any place. This would mean that the education proposed here is of universal applicability. Does Rousseau take up this subject again later on in what you read, Mr. Lane? Is this education in fact possible at all times in all places?

^v The class is using Barbara Foxley's translation, probably the 1961 reprint (Jean-Jacques Rousseau, *Emile*, trans. Barbara Foxley (New York: Dutton, 1961).

Mr. Lane: The first stipulation of it is, and that is that the education be good in terms of itself.

LS: But is it possible everywhere? Is it universal, strictly speaking?

Student: Not as he gives it, strictly speaking, no.

Another Student: He issues sort of a word of caution about the fact that one would have to adapt to these particular circumstances the principles. . . .

LS: Yes, but let us look at page 19 in your translation—paragraphs 5 and 6 there—which is relevant. “The land or country is not indifferent.” Do you have it?

Mr. Reinken: “The birthplace is not a matter of indifference in the education of man; it is only in temperate climes that he comes to his full growth. The disadvantages of extremes are easily seen. A man is not planted in one place like a tree, to stay there the rest of his life, and to pass from one extreme to another you must travel twice as far as he who starts halfway. If the inhabitant of a temperate climate passes in turn through both extremes his advantage is plain, for although he may be changed as much as he who goes from one extreme to the other, he only removes halfway from his natural condition. A Frenchman can live in New Guinea or in Lapland, but a negro cannot live in Tornea nor a Samoyed in Benin. It seems also as if the brain were less perfectly organized in the two extremes. Neither the negroes nor the Laps are as wise as Europeans. So if I want my pupil to be a citizen of the world I will choose him in the temperate zone, in France, for example, rather than elsewhere.”^{vi}

LS: So, there is no question of universal applicability simply. It is the education of man as man; but since it is to be the best education, it should have the best material of education, and this best material of education is limited to the temperate zone, which of course doesn’t mean that everyone in the temperate zone is fit for that education. That goes without saying. But in a general way [the temperate zone is fit for the best education]. So this must be kept in mind.

Now, let us turn to Book 1. Rousseau begins with a statement we have heard more than once: nature is good because it is created. Man corrupts everything. That is a thesis which goes throughout Rousseau’s work. The question only is: how far this is true eventually? I mean, the qualifications do not appear here. But let us not go into that question now; let us say simply that it is his [inaudible]. The question arises on this basis: should man do nothing, since nature is good? To which Rousseau answers “no; after man has corrupted everything, very much everything depends on what man does to counteract the corruption.” The corruption is man’s fault—you recognize the theological equivalent: the corruption is man’s fault, but it is not amended by God. It can only be amended by man. I repeat again that Rousseau’s statements become meaningful only when you see them against the background of the theological tradition. They are incomplete, but they are very easy to fill out because the amount of theological knowledge for doing that is not very great. Everyone even today can easily acquire it. So, there is a corruption, but there is no redemption; the redemption can only be human. Now, let us read page 5, bottom, and the note. We cannot read the whole note.

^{vi} *E*, 266-67; 178-79.

Mr. Reinken: “Tender, anxious mother, I appeal to you. You can remove this young tree from the highway and shield it from the crushing force of social conventions. Tend and water it ere it dies.”

LS: No, not “of social conventions”; “of human opinions,” he says. I admit these are almost equivalent terms for Rousseau, but the translator should not take liberties. I mean, “*opinions humaines*” is as easy to translate from French into English as “*conventions sociales*.” In a good society, the translator would receive a public spanking, because there is no excuse for that; but such well-ordered societies cannot be expected, because it would require a complete change in the publishing business, and this is beyond human power, surely. Yes; continue where you left off.

Mr. Reinken: “Tend and water it ere it dies. One day its fruit will reward your care. From the outset raise a wall round your child's soul; another may sketch the plan, you alone should carry it into execution.”

LS: Now, read at the end of the note belonging to that, which begins, “The first education undoubtedly belongs to the women.” At the end of this note.

Mr. Reinken: “Ambition, avarice, tyranny, the mistaken foresight of fathers, their neglect, their harshness, are a hundredfold more harmful to the child than the blind affection of the mother. Moreover, I must explain what I mean by a mother and that explanation follows.”^{vii}

LS: Yes, you see, if you read it this way, one can simply say: how touching, the harsh fathers and these gentle mothers who can't do wrong. But he says: well, wait for what comes later. So, you can't take this literally. I read to you the clearest statement on this subject which I can remember, and that is in the *Letters Written from the Mountain*. I can't find now the number; in the Garnier Edition, page 202. Someone who has attacked him says that the *Emile* would serve as guide to the fathers and mothers. Rousseau: “This assertion is not excusable, since I have shown in the Preface, and sometimes in the book, an entirely different intention. The subject is a new system of education, of which I offer the plan to the examination by the wise and *not* a method for the mothers and fathers, of which I never thought. If, by a figure of speech which is rather common, I sometimes *seemed* to address the word to them, this is, either in order to make myself easier understood, or in order to express myself in lesser^{viii} words.”^{ix}

It is not addressed to the mothers and fathers; keep this in mind. This lure for the mothers can't be taken very seriously. In the same context, by the way, he says, “All this is true, especially of books which are not written for the people, as mine always have been.”^x Rousseau's books have never been written for the people—here he says it—only for what he calls “the sages.”

^{vii} *E*, 245-46; 161-62.

^{viii} “Fewer” is better.

^{ix} From Letter 9; see Rousseau, 2001, 211. Strauss alters the passage slightly. The emphases are Strauss's.

^x *Ibid*.

In the sequel he states this thesis: “man could not have been born grown up. He had to be born as a helpless baby.”^{xi} Why? Because if he had been born grown up, he would have been absolutely helpless. He would not have had any notions of what to do with his arms and legs, and so on; because this knowledge, these ideas are necessarily acquired in a long process. And without the long process of experience, you never get these ideas. This is of course an implicit rejection of the Biblical notion of an Adam created perfect. Let us turn to page 6, paragraph 3.

Mr. Reinken: “This education comes to us from nature, from men, or from things. The inner growth of our organs and faculties is the education of nature, the use we learn to make of this growth is the education of men, what we gain by our experience of our surroundings is the education of things. Thus we are each taught by three masters.”^{xii}

LS: Now, one moment. Let us first consider that: what is this relation? An education from nature is the inner development of our faculties and organs. The organs we understand easily: the liver of a grown-up man is not the liver of a baby, and so on. The same is also true of the brain. But what about the faculties? “The use one teaches us to make of this development”: nature does not teach us the use to make of the development of our faculties. What does this mean? By nature, would there be a natural development of the faculties? Or, what is the relation of the natural development of the faculties to the natural education proper? I believe one can say this on the basis of what we have read in the *Second Discourse*: since the development of the faculties presupposes language, and language cannot possibly be acquired except through men talking to the child, the development of reason is necessarily an education of men and not of nature. Now, the next paragraph. Oh, I am very sorry, I made a mistake; I have my notes in some disorder. We must read the preceding paragraph.

Mr. Reinken: “We are born weak, we need strength; helpless, we need aid; foolish, we need reason.”

LS: So, we are born stupid; i.e. we are these stupid animals individually which the species was at the beginning. Go on.

Mr. Reinken: “All that we lack at birth, [all that we need when we come to man's estate, is the] gift of education.”^{xiii}

LS: Now, if we take this literally, it means we owe everything to education; and in a way, of course Rousseau ascribes to education a kind of omnipotence. That would be implied in this statement taken in isolation. But he qualifies it immediately: there is a certain education coming from nature. This education coming from nature, however, is only one part, the meaning of which will be explained in the sequel. Then he speaks of three kinds of education and the three kinds of masters. They are in contradiction with each other, and this contradiction is to be overcome. This passage is⁴ modeled on a passage in Montesquieu's *Spirit of the Laws*, I am reasonably sure, which I will read you because it is helpful for the

^{xi} Not a direct quotation.

^{xii} *E*, 247; 162.

^{xiii} *E*, 247; 162.

understanding, although Rousseau states it in different terms. Montesquieu also speaks of a threefold education, *Spirit of the Laws*, Book 4, Chapter 4:

“Most ancient peoples lived in governments, or under governments which had virtue for its principle—“ that is, according to Montesquieu, the principle of democracy. “and, since virtue was there in its force, one did there things which we do not see any more today, and which astonish our little souls. Their education had another advantage over ours; it was never denied—“ How do you translate “*démence*”?

Student: To say “it is a lie.”

LS: Let us say “never contradicted.”

“Epaminondas, in the last year of his life, said, listened, saw, did the same things as in the age in which he had begun to become instructed. Today, we receive three different or contrary educations; that of our fathers, that of our teachers, and that of the world. What one tells us in the last—“ namely, in the world “subverts all the ideas of the two first. This comes, in part, from the contrast which exists among us between the obligations of religion and the obligations of the world; something which the ancients did not know.”^{xiv}

In the world you have to behave like a French nobleman—because he thinks chiefly, of course, of the French society—you have to duel, to defend your honor in duels. But what you learn in your religious instruction is that homicide is a grave sin: contradiction. And other things of the same kind.

Now, Rousseau thinks of that, although he does not express that here. Let us see what is the consequence. There are three kinds of education which contradict each other, and that leads to a non-harmonious personality, as they would say today. One must find a unity of this education; and how is this unity to be found? Answer: we must organize our human education, and even our education by things, with a view to the natural education, or to nature. Let us read page 6, the eighth paragraph. “What is the end of education?” he asks.

Mr. Reinken: “What is this goal? As we have just shown, it is the goal of nature. Since all three modes of education must work together, the two that we can control must follow the lead of that which is beyond our control.”^{xv}

LS: We can control the things to which the child is exposed. We can surely control what we do to the child or not. We cannot control the development of nature proper. Therefore⁵ that which is not subject to our control becomes the guide. That is very interesting. It means in a way [that] the lowest becomes the controlling thing because it is not itself controllable. According to the Aristotelian view, the end of education would be taken from the highest, because it is intrinsically the highest. But the lowest, let us say the needs of the body—because it amounts to that, or is closely connected to that—this is undefeatable and especially in a very young child. Therefore: forget about everything else and attune the other things to the lowest and most solid.

^{xiv} See Montesquieu, 1989, Book 4, Chapter 4, p. 35. Strauss leaves a bit of the passage out.

^{xv} *E*, 247; 163.

So, it is absolutely in style, what Rousseau does here up to this point. But the question of course is, what is nature? Perhaps this word *natura* has a sense two ways. One must try to fix its meaning. Now let us see. Take the next paragraph.

Mr. Reinken: “Nature, we are told, is merely habit. What does that mean? Are there not habits formed under compulsion, habits which never stifle nature? Such, for example, are the habits of plants trained horizontally. The plant keeps its artificial shape, but the sap has not changed its course, and any new growth the plant may make will be vertical. It is the same with a man’s disposition—“

LS: “Inclinations,” he happens to say here. All right.

Mr. Reinken: “while the conditions remain the same, habits, even the least natural of them, hold good; but change the conditions, habits vanish, nature reasserts herself. Education itself is but habit, for are there not people who forget or lose their education and others who keep it? Whence comes this difference? If the term nature is to be restricted to habits conformable to nature we need say no more.”^{xvi}

LS: Read the next paragraph. I made a mistake; this was not necessary. This was only a polemic against the contemporary.

Mr. Reinken: “We are born sensitive and from our birth onwards we are affected in various ways by our environment. As soon as we become conscious of our—”

LS: “Become so to speak,” he adds. So, in other words, Rousseau never would say that children have consciousness.

Mr. Reinken: “—so to speak of our sensations we tend to seek or shun the things that cause them, at first because they are pleasant or unpleasant, then because they suit us or not, and at last because of judgments formed by means of the ideas of happiness and goodness^{xvii} which reason gives us. These tendencies gain strength and permanence with the growth of reason, but hindered by our habits they are more or less warped by our prejudices.”

LS: “By our opinions.” Yes.

Student: “Before this change they are what I call Nature within us.”^{xviii}

LS: Yes; in other words, what is the natural? One can say: what is not affected by our opinions; these are the primitive dispositions in contradistinction to any social institutions. One *can* say “prejudices”; this is an interpretation. But it is probably not by accident that Rousseau speaks here of opinions. Yes, Mr. Mueller?

^{xvi} E, 247-48; 163.

^{xvii} “of happiness and goodness” is Foxley’s translation of *de bonheur ou de perfection*. “Of happiness or perfection” is better.

^{xviii} E, 248; 163.

Mr. Mueller: No, I'll ask my question later.

LS: Good. Now, let us see. [LS goes to the blackboard] Here the education is to be emphatically natural. What does this mean? This is intelligible only if we see as the opposite the unnatural education, and, of course, that is what Rousseau discusses throughout the book. For example, that the mother does not—what is the English word?

Student: Nurse.

LS: [That the mother does not] nurse her baby is unnatural. And that children are in swaddling clothes, that is unnatural. Give the body freedom; that is simple. But Rousseau has a much deeper problem in mind, and this he explains in the sequel. The natural education is the education which educates a man for himself. An unnatural education is an education which educates him for the others. All the present-day talk about the self-directed and other-directed, that all has its root here. Therefore you have either to combat the social institution—that is the natural education—or you have to combat nature—that is the unnatural education. One cannot do the two things at the same time. Now, why is this so? Read the following paragraph.

Mr. Reinken: “Every partial society, when it is narrow and well-united, tends to withdraw from the large—^{“xix}

LS: “Alienates itself from the large.” Now, “the large” is the human race, and compared with that, every state, small *or* great, is a partial society. Go on.

Mr. Reinken: “Every patriot is hard towards foreigners: they are only men, they are nothing in his eyes. This inconvenience is inevitable, but is weak. The essential thing is to be good to the people with whom one lives. Outside, the Spartan is ambitious, avaricious, and unjust; but disinterest, equity, and concord reign within his walls. Mistrust those cosmopolitans who go searching far and wide in their books for duties which they disdain to fill towards those around them. Such a philosopher loves the Tartars, in order to dispense from loving his neighbors.”

LS: That takes too long if you translate. Read it—I am sorry—I will only make notes when the translation is really bad.

Mr. Reinken: “The natural man lives for himself; he is the unit, the whole, dependent only on himself and on his like. The citizen is but the numerator of a fraction, whose value depends on its denominator; his value depends upon the whole, that is, on the community.”

LS: In other words, natural man is a whole, is entire. The citizen is a fraction; he is only as a part of the whole. His goodness consists in being a good part. Yes.

Mr. Reinken: “Good social institutions are those best fitted to make a man unnatural—“

^{xix} *la grande*. As Strauss will note in a moment, the student is translating on the fly, as the students occasionally do in this course. I will note deviations from the class translation only when the deviation seems to make a difference to the argument or is otherwise noteworthy. [Ed.]

LS: “*Dénaturer l’homme*,” make him unnatural; make him dependent on others.

Mr. Reinken: “to exchange his independence for dependence, to merge the unit in the group, so that he no longer regards himself as one, but as a part of the whole, and is only conscious of the common life. A citizen of Rome was neither Caius nor Lucius, he was a Roman; he ever loved his country better [than] his life.”^{xx}

LS: Now he gives a famous ancient story about dedication to the country, to the polis, to the fatherland, which we cannot read here. The main point, I believe, is clear: citizenship is, strictly speaking, an unnatural condition. You can educate a child to be a citizen—Rousseau will speak of it—but then he will not be a human being proper. He will not be—how would they say today?—an all-rounded personality. He will be specialized in every respect. He will fulfill a special function in society and in a particular society, an American citizen, and not a human being in the full sense of the word. That is what he means. Now, let us see on page 8, the third paragraph.

Mr. Reinken: “He who would preserve the supremacy of natural feelings in social life knows not what he asks. Ever at war with himself, hesitating between his wishes and his duties, he will be neither a man nor a citizen. He will be of no use to himself nor to others. He will be a man of our day, a Frenchman, an Englishman, one of the great middle class.”^{xxi}

LS: No; “*un bourgeois*.” He will be nothing, he goes on. So, in other words, present-day education is an education which doesn’t know what it wants. It doesn’t make men full citizens, and it doesn’t make them full men. The objectives are necessarily opposed⁶. Then he says, “if you want to have an example of a public education, i.e. education for citizenship, then read Plato’s *Republic*”; and nothing could be truer. That is exactly what it is: when you become absolutely a part of the whole, and you find happiness not in your own happiness, but in the happiness of the polis; and the question of your own happiness must not arise. But the still greater example, in Rousseau’s view, is Lycurgus, the famous if mythical Spartan legislator, who has denatured man, and not merely purified him as Plato did. This we have to take up later, but we must only hammer in the importance of this point. Now in this book we will see the education not to the citizen, but to the man. Let us keep this in mind for the time being.

There is a passage which I wanted to read, again from the *Lettres Écrites de la Montagne*, but it will take us too long. But here in this passage in the *Letters Written from the Mountain*, in a note, Rousseau says, “Patriotism and humanity are two virtues incompatible in their energy.”^{xxii} In a lukewarm form they are compatible, but the 100 percent dedication to the fatherland is incompatible with humanity, and the 100 percent dedication to humanity is incompatible with patriotism; and he develops this. This passage is of the utmost importance. Now, why does Rousseau decide against Plato or Lycurgus? Page 8, the second paragraph from the bottom.

Mr. Reinken: “The public institute—”

^{xx} *E*, 249; 163-64.

^{xxi} *E*, 249-50; 164.

^{xxii} In the First Letter. See Rousseau, 2001, 149.

LS: “Public education,” “*L’institution publique*.”

Mr. Reinken: “Public education does not and cannot exist—”

LS: “Does not exist *any more*,” “*n’existe plus*.” It has existed.

Mr. Reinken: “any more, for there is neither country nor patriot.”

LS: Literally, “there is no longer a fatherland nor can there be any more citizens.”^{xxiii}
As Rousseau puts it elsewhere—I forgot where—only bourgeois are possible, not citizens.^{xxiv}

Mr. Reinken: “The very words should be struck out of our language.”

LS: “Of the modern languages,” of the *modern* languages: they had meaning in the ancient languages. Now, how does he go on?

Mr. Reinken: “The reason does not concern us at present, so that though I know it I refrain from stating it.”^{xxv}

LS: So, what is that reason? He hints very broadly. What does he mean? If you look up the passages in the *Letters from the Mountain*, [he] states it. I cannot read this, it is too long. It is in the First Letter. Christianity, that is the point. He also indicates it in the last chapter of the *Social Contract* on civil religion. Because the two fatherlands, the heavenly and the earthly fatherland, do not permit absolute dedication to the one earthly fatherland.^{xxvi}

Student: May I ask a question? You said a moment before there’s neither country nor patriot; you said there is bourgeoisie. What has Christianity to do with that?

LS: That belongs together. Rousseau has not developed that, but Hegel did it in a way, this connection. We don’t have to go into that. The main point is this: what is the bourgeois? The

^{xxiii} More literally, “where there is no longer a fatherland, there can no longer be citizens.”

^{xxiv} Rousseau does not say precisely that anywhere I know of. But in *Considerations On the Government of Poland*, Rousseau asserts that “there are no longer any French, Germans, Spanish, even English; there are only Europeans” (Jean-Jacques Rousseau, *The Plan for Perpetual Peace, On the Government of Poland, and Other Writings on History and Politics*, trans. Christopher Kelly and Judith Bush, ed. Christopher Kelly (New Hanover, NH: University Press of New England, 2005), 174. In the *First Discourse*, Rousseau claims that “we have Physicists, Geometers, Chemists, Astronomers, Poets, Musicians, Painters; we no longer have citizens” (FD, 26; 19). And in *Letters From the Mountain*, addressing the Genevans Rousseau says, “you are neither Romans, nor Spartans; you are not even Athenians. Leave aside these great names that do not suit you. You are Merchants, Artisans, Bourgeois, always occupied with their private interests, with their work, with their trafficking, with their gain; people for whom even liberty is only a means for acquiring without obstacle and for possessing in safety” (Rousseau, 2001, 292-93). Thanks to Christopher Kelly for this last reference. [Ed.]

^{xxv} E, 250; 164.

^{xxvi} See Rousseau, 2001, 146-49 and Rousseau, 1994, 4.8, p. 218. The chapter on the civil religion is the second to last.

bourgeois is a man who is the subject of a monarch, and doesn't defend his country, because of mercenary armies. Therefore, Hegel can say, the bourgeois is characterized by fear of violent death. In other words, what Hobbes said of man, Rousseau and Hegel say of the bourgeois. He doesn't fight; and therefore there is strictly speaking no patriotism there. This is somehow connected with Christianity in so far as the absolute monarchies were of course monarchies by divine grace, i.e. based on a religious foundation, on a Christian religious foundation.

Student: Where are those references which you mentioned? Where does he go into this?

LS: One I remember distinctly is the first *Letter from the Mountain*. *Lettres Écrites de la Montagne*. Does he speak there of the difference of citizen and bourgeois?

Student: Yes; "But there are no longer citizens, but only Frenchmen."

LS: That is something else. But where does the clear opposition of citizen and bourgeois occur?^{xxvii} That I do not remember now, but it stems from Rousseau; this I know. Of course the Marxian use comes directly from Hegel, but Marx gave it a more specific meaning in connection with an analysis of the modern economic system. Now, read the following paragraph: "There remains finally domestic education, or that of nature."

Mr. Reinken: "There remains the education of the home or of nature."

LS: So, in other words, public education is impossible. Yes.

Mr. Reinken: "But how will a man live with others if he is educated for himself alone? If the twofold aims could be resolved into one by removing the man's self-contradictions, one great obstacle to his happiness would be gone. To judge of this you must see the man full-grown; you must have noted his inclinations, watched his progress, followed his steps; in a word you must really know a natural man. When you have read this work, I think you will have made some progress in this inquiry."

LS: Here he says: perhaps this contradiction between the natural man and the civil man might be overcome. That would of course require a radical change in European society; a change which reminds of that brought about by the French Revolution. In a future republican secular society, these two non-contradictory objectives might be united again. But this is surely not the last word of Rousseau. While he was in favor of the secular state, he did not believe that even the secular state could solve the problem completely. A fundamental contradiction between civil man and natural man remains. This is developed in the *Social Contract*, in the second book—I do not know the chapter; I didn't write down the chapter—but it is clear that the denaturalization of man, making man unnatural, is essential for his becoming a citizen in antiquity or in a modern secular state as well.^{xxviii} But still, what Rousseau is nevertheless trying to do is this: to make the contrast between natural man and civil man less pronounced than it otherwise is. [He will attempt] an approximation of civil man to natural man⁷. This will become clearer from the sequel. Read the beginning of the next paragraph.

^{xxvii} See note 105.

^{xxviii} Chapter 7. See Rousseau, 1994, 2.7, p. 155.

Student: “What must be done to train this exceptional man!”

LS: “This rare man;” Exceptional could mean exceptionally gifted; and we know that Emile is *not* exceptionally gifted. This will be made clear.

Student: “We can do much, but the chief thing is to prevent anything being done.”^{xxix}

LS: Yes; in other words, the good education is negative education. It is a kind of laissez-faire. Now, here we must reflect for one moment about the difference between that and the classical view of education as presented, say, in Aristotle’s *Politics*, books 7 and 8, and as in Plato. There is of course something parallel; the words are the same: natural. But for the classics the natural end of man can only be reached by the exercise of reason, whether in education or in economics does not make any difference. Man is not a plant or a brute, so reason is to control. Hobbes says, in effect, reason as such is powerless. The passions must do the trick, and they can do it. I give now a very provisional statement which needs further explanation: the passions must be good; the play of the passions, their inter-play, is good. Nature is good in the sense of laissez-faire. Laissez-faire means that the play of the passions is good, and the intervention of reason is bad; and whether that is education or economics does not make a fundamental difference.

Student: May I ask a general question here? Many of these things seem to be connected with Pascal [inaudible]. I imagine I see two [inaudible].

LS : Namely?

Student:⁸ When he says that nature is but custom: “Nature, they tell us, is only habit.”^{xxx} That doesn’t seem very plausible that he is only speaking of Monsieur Formey.^{xxxi}

LS: Yes. Formey: that was a rather insignificant academician in Berlin.

Student: In the first note, where he says in effect that the laws are always concerned with property more than with persons^{xxxii}, because they have their object as peace, and not virtue. So Pascal says that peace is the sovereign good.^{xxxiii} Of course that is in society, and it is all fundamentally absurd; he very quickly realizes the absurdity of civil society, because it is perfectly irrational, or at least some civil societies are strictly irrational. A person [inaudible] can become king; but you can’t question it. If you question it, you shake it all. Or is this . . . ?

^{xxix} *E*, 251; 166.

^{xxx} *E*, 247; 163.

^{xxxi} The student refers to Rousseau’s marginal annotation (which, in turn, refers to Formey) in the original edition of *Emile*. Johann Heinrich Samuel Formey (1711-97). Formey, a contributor to the *Encyclopédie* and secretary of the Berlin Academy, was the author of *Anti-Emile* (1763). The annotation can be found on page 1294 of the Pléiade edition.

^{xxxii} *E*, 246; 161.

^{xxxiii} *Pensées*, 299.

LS: I don't quite understand you. Do you mean the question, is there not any relevant relation of Rousseau to Pascal? To this I would say I don't think so, for the following reason: Pascal was important to Rousseau qua Catholic, i.e. he did not need Pascal in particular for knowing the general lines of the Catholic teaching. Then we turn to the other consideration which I would submit, which is this: when he speaks of his⁹ [predecessors] to whom he owes something of importance, then the name Hobbes we have seen very emphatically. Now, these points which you make—not virtue but peace—is also Hobbes. And that nature is bad, that, of course, he read in Pascal, but he read and heard it also elsewhere: the New Testament itself. Therefore I don't believe it is very helpful.

Now, where were we in this passage? To repeat, natural education is *laissez-faire*. But of course that cannot be literally true: after all, he does a lot of things all the time. So, what is the relation of nature and what Rousseau as educator does? Nature is good and perfect; no intervention. Unfortunately, intervention comes so easily to man; nature must be protected against intervention. Natural man, if we may say so, would intervene with nature, and therefore something must be done to prevent this intervention. A long time ago, I used this formulation, [concerning] when one speaks of the invisible hand in Adam Smith: I said that is right, but not complete; the true economic system requires the invisible hand plus Adam Smith. If people hadn't learned from Adam Smith, they would never get by nature the natural system. Same here: nature plus Rousseau as the protector of nature; otherwise natural education will not come about naturally. Nature must be protected, just as the economic system in the Smithian sense needs of course protection in order to function. There must be laws regarding fraud and theft and some other things; otherwise it wouldn't work—and bankruptcy, of course.

Later on, on page 10 in the second half of the second paragraph, he speaks of a further reason why it is necessary to have such an education: not for this or that job, profession, social status, but an education of man as man because of the enormous social mobility^{xxxiv}. The son of a French nobleman can no longer have servants; he won't have that castle or that manor. In other words, some revolution is in the offing—Rousseau has given other indications of this apprehension or hope, whatever it was—and we link this up with what was said before. If there should be a revolution, it might be possible to bring about a more natural life of mankind than there existed before. For example, take very simple things: you had these famous wigs in the eighteenth century, you know, and with the French Revolution they simply disappeared; men grew their beards naturally. Compare any famous man of the nineteenth century, the photo, with that of famous men of the eighteenth century. Nineteenth century men are bearded men; the eighteenth century men are That this of course can never be thought through is obvious, because even in the nineteenth century, where they tried to be natural, they still cut their nails, and 100 percent natural life would be one where you don't even cut your nails. So, this can only be roughly true. Now we make a jump and turn to page 15 at the bottom.

Mr. Reinken: “The new-born infant cries, his early days are spent in crying. He is alternately petted and shaken by way of soothing him; sometimes he is threatened, sometimes beaten, to keep him quiet. We do what he wants or we make him do what we want, we submit to his whims or subject him to our own. There is no middle course; he must rule or obey. Thus his earliest ideas are those of the tyrant or the slave.”

^{xxxiv} E, 252; 167.

LS: Literally, “of empire and servitude.” Go on.

Student: “He commands before he can speak, he obeys before he can act, and sometimes he is punished for faults before he is aware of them, or rather before they are committed. Thus early are the seeds of evil passions sown in his young heart”^{xxxv}.

LS: “Evil” is not in the text; but all right: “of evils which one then imputes to nature; and after having taken pains to make him evil, one complains about finding him evil,” i.e. evil by nature. That is an absolutely decisive thing for the whole education. The education consists of the fact that the educator does not sow seeds of evil in the child. Then he will never be evil, because there are no seeds of evil in him. By nature he is good. All evil comes from interference. There is, of course, a certain element of truth: you can teach a child to lie by telling him, you lied, and the poor child might never have thought of lying—and this kind of obvious error which can be made. But Rousseau means something much more fundamental. The view of Rousseau can be stated schematically as follows: viciousness is pride, concern with superiority to others; all evil is pride—that he takes over from Hobbes. And now, contrary to Hobbes, he says evil—and pride—arises only through society: there is no natural rule in man for being proud in this sense (pride I use as a very wide term).

[END OF TAPE SIDE 1]

[In progress] **LS:** —this must be prevented: there must be never anything like competition among children, for example. Well, you know how important that is in progressive education. There must not be grades; there must not be a ranking of the children according to scholastic achievement; they have to treat each other as equals in every respect. Equality of this kind is the only thing to consider, so to speak. Training in reading, writing, arithmetic, or what have you, has to be subordinated to this good-fellowship. I do not know which term they use for that, but I knew it once. You know, there must be no competitiveness of any kind, and if this means that the gifted children are absolutely bored by the fact that they have to accept the pace of the slowest one, that is all right, because the worst thing is distinction, discrimination, or whatever you call it. This would have gone very well but for the fact that in the end Johnny proved to be less able to read and write than Ivan. And then in this very silly way, but very characteristic way, the form of education, the concern with excellence—which means of course with excelling others inevitably—is beginning to be recognized again. But the root of that is without any question Rousseau. Pride, and everything allied to it, is not natural to man and can be eradicated by the proper kind of education from the soul of man. Connected with this is the following point which you find on page 19 in the third paragraph.

Mr. Reinken: “It is one thing to follow a young man about for four years, another to be his guide for five-and-twenty. You find a tutor for your son when he is already formed; I want one for him before he is born. Your man may change his pupil every five years; mine will never have but one pupil. You distinguish between the teacher and the tutor. Another piece of folly! Do you make any distinction between the pupil and the scholar?”

^{xxxv} E, 261;173-74.

LS: In other words, one child [is] being brought up: don't change the instructor, from his earliest childhood until the end of his educational stage. There is one child, and also one science which is to be taught—not reading, writing, arithmetic, which are two, perhaps three, sciences—but one. What is that?

Mr. Reinken: “There is only one science for children to learn—the duties of man.”

LS: You see, the duties of man are to be taught. So, that is very old-fashioned; sounds right from the oldest times. But now he explains it.

Mr. Reinken: “This science is one, and, whatever Xenophon may say of the education of the Persians, it is indivisible.”

LS: Where they had education in justice *and* in horse-back riding *and* in shooting with a javelin.

Mr. Reinken: “Besides, I prefer to call the man who has this knowledge master^{xxxvi} rather than teacher, since it is a question of guidance rather than instruction. He must not give precepts, he must let the scholar find them out for himself.”^{xxxvii}

LS: This is the other point: teach education without precepts, i.e. without commands and prohibitions. That follows necessarily from the principle of eradicating or preventing the emergence of pride, because command or provision means obeying; and then there is a relation of superior to inferior, the commander and the being commanded. Now, once the child gets authority, once the child gets any notion of authority, he imagines, well, when I grow up I also want to be an authority, and his soul is absolutely ruined by this thought. That is what Rousseau's teaching is. Now, let us read the next paragraph.

Mr. Reinken: “If the master is to be so carefully chosen, he may well choose his pupil, above all when he proposes to set a pattern for others. This choice cannot depend on the child's genius or character, as I adopt him before he is born, and they are only known when my task is finished. If I had my choice I would take a child of ordinary mind, such as I assume in my pupil. It is ordinary people who have to be educated, and their education alone can serve as a pattern for the education of their fellows. The others find their way alone.”^{xxxviii}

LS: Now, that is crucial for the understanding of the whole book. Emile, the pupil here to be educated, is “*un homme vulgaire*,” a common man. He is a common man—that will be absolutely decisive—i.e. he is one of those who are meant to be members of the people, of society, citizens, not these marginal men who have the highest perfection of the individual. Mr. Butterworth?

Mr. Butterworth: I think I see what you are getting at; but he, says later on that he doesn't mind that Emile comes from a family with some rank in the social order.^{xxxix}

^{xxxvi} *gouverneur*.

^{xxxvii} *E*, 266; 178.

^{xxxviii} *E*, 266; 178.

^{xxxix} *E*, 267; 179.

LS: You see, some concessions to the world as it is are inevitable. Rousseau only tries to get along with a minimum of such considerations; and the minimum is, for example, this child will be educated alone, i.e. without any other children. So there is a minimum of sociality. Absence of sociality is impossible, because, after all, the child of a few months needs a nurse, and there will be other people around. The point which we must keep in mind is that Emile has a common mind, “*un esprit commun*,” and is “*un homme vulgaire*.” He is a man of whom the highest development of reason cannot be expected.

Student: There is one question, in the above paragraph: does he ever give any content to the duties of man? He says there is only one science to teach. . . .

LS: Yes, sure, he gives that content. We will come to that. They are not so greatly different in many ways from what we ordinarily understand by the duties of man. We will find that later.

Student: It seems to me that if you took the sentence just following that, where he says there should be no precepts. . . .

LS: Let us take one of the simple precepts: you should not steal. But Rousseau will never say to the boy, don’t steal. He will teach it in an indirect way. In the second part of the *Emile*, he will explain that. Yes?

Student: If this is the education of man for citizenship—

LS: No, it is not. That is the difficulty: he will be educated only as a man and not as a citizen. But what Rousseau has in mind is something that will come out when we read later. [Blackboard] This is the education of man, and this is the education of the citizen. He is somehow trying to bring these divergent lines together—however, he does not tell us that now, you know; that is the surprise—¹⁰. Because Emile is “*un homme vulgaire*,” he has to become a citizen, and therefore there must be some other [inaudible]. But let us not go into that. The paradox is that he is a man to be educated as a man and not as a citizen, who *however*, is a vulgar man, a common man. That is the difficulty. I could answer that question, but it would not be helpful. You must see it as a question. In the sequel on page 20, the fifth paragraph, he makes clear that Emile is an orphan^{x1}. I mean, even if he has a father and mother, they have nothing to do with his education. Does this ring a bell?

Student: Adam was an orphan.

LS: No, no.

Student: Rousseau’s five children?

LS: Oh, no. Sure, but this is psychology, autobiography. We are not concerned with that. No; on the highest level. Where do you find education of orphans?

^{x1} E, 267; 179.

Student: In Plato's *Republic*.

LS: Aha, absolutely. What does Plato say there?

Student: There is neither brother nor sister, mother nor father.

LS: No, that is not the point I mean.

Student: When they were setting up the state they had to take the children away from their parents.

LS: Exactly. End of Book 7.^{xli} The philosophers who take over the city, in order to have a good city, expel everyone older than ten. Therefore they make them orphans. That the fathers survive rusticated in the country is of no importance. Now, this has enormous implications. Mr. Morrison?

Mr. Morrison: There is a connection between the not teaching by precept which reminds one of the refusal to tell Glaucon: Glaucon asks for a resume of concepts, of what is the idea of the good, but this

LS: But Glaucon is not a small child, do you see? I mean, a teacher of young men who are surely grown-up human beings is one thing. But to a child, you cannot apply this to a child. There is no comparison here. We are concerned only with what is to be done to children, and clearly, Plato's children are taught a lot. Rousseau is quite right to believe that many things can be taught to children playfully, through plays. In other words, Plato did not favor the—how shall I say—this kind of education where you teach, say, Latin grammar by spanking; nor did he on the other hand take the way of the progressive education where you don't learn letters, as you know. And I believe that is the principle: you get only "cat" as a whole; you see a picture of a cat written down, and then you descend gradually to *c*, and *a* and *t*; but to start from the letters is an incredible imposition on the poor child. You must have heard of it, and some of you may have experienced it.

Now, Emile is an orphan, and this reminds us of Plato's expulsion of everyone older than ten at the end of the seventh book. But what is the enormous difference? I admit not only that Rousseau is influenced by Plato; that is undoubtedly the case, but what is the difference? What is the most striking thing which Plato does to his children in the *Republic*?

Student: Makes them watch the wars.

LS: That is later. That is also very un-Rousseauan; but right at the beginning, when he begins this exposé of the education of children; what is the first thing?

Student: They live together?

^{xli} *Republic*, 541a.

LS: No, that is clear. Teaching myths; myths, that is it. Emile is not told anything. In other words, here Rousseau tries to educate the common man without “opinions,” without instilling opinions; and let us think of this as free from prejudices. You might look up—we cannot read that now—in the second book, on page 76, second paragraph, or third: free from prejudices.^{xlii} Emile is to be educated as if he were to be a perfect philosopher, if a perfect philosopher would be a man who has no prejudices as prejudices. This is crucial. But here this is not a man born to be a philosopher, but a common man. The implication: every man may be educated to be a philosopher. That is clearly contrary to Plato. In other language, every man can be educated to be a self-sufficient—intellectually self-sufficient—sovereign individual.

The connection with democracy is obvious: in the ideal case, democracy would be a society in which every member is a fully rational being. Do you understand what I mean? That every citizen is really competent to vote, and not merely on the basis—how do they say?—on the basis of family tradition or class relation. You have heard of these voting studies and so forth. This is of course no rational choice. This is a choice which is practically inevitable, but it is not rational. They are not people who are competent to choose the wisest men for rulers. They are still less competent to judge of the measures; for example, what to do about Cuba, or what to do about Medicare, or whatever it may be. That is simply decided in a crude way, which is not a rational way. An ideal democracy would be a democracy in which every member is competent. You read this sometimes in present-day social science, or political science literature, that this is the wrong notion of democracy, the idealistic notion, which in a way John Stuart Mill is *said* to have had. And the right view is of course to take the democratic people as they are, with their political bosses and their machines and smoke-filled rooms, and all the other nice institutions, and say, study that—that kind of democracy is possible, as is proven by the fact that it is actual—and forget about this ideal democracy. That is, I think, a very powerful element in present-day political science. It is frequently not even mentioned, because it seems to be so obviously reasonable. But one must consider what democracy in the highest case meant: an association of rational men who *can* govern themselves. Don’t forget that the word self-government was sometimes used in the past for describing democracy. So Rousseau educates—from this point of view—Emile to be a sovereign individual, and therefore a perfectly rational member of a society of rational people. One can never forget that. But there is one great objection which is possible, and what is that, taking a broad view of the question?

Student: People are not orphans.

LS: Yes, all right; that is a practical difficulty, but you could have boarding schools instead; boarding schools, and for each young citizen a single tutor. You know, God knows what we can get once our modern technological system has fully developed. There will be a two-hour working day. You never can tell. But no, on the basis of Rousseau’s own statements here.

Student: The natural relationship of love can never be replaced.

^{xlii} E, 351; 248. While this passage is not obviously among the best-suited to demonstrate that Emile is to be raised without prejudices, Strauss presumably chooses it because it occurs in the discussion of why Emile will not learn fables.

LS: That is what Rousseau denies; we come to that. In other words, he is willing to sacrifice love, lest this terrible thing, pride, competitiveness, and so forth, emerge.

Student: Did he do that in this first book?

LS: That I cannot say now. But let us now follow the argument. Rousseau tries to educate *every* human being, at least to the extent that it is possible, as if he were a philosopher. What is the objection to that, to this transforming the human race, as far as possible, into men of perfectly cultivated reason, i.e. philosophers. What is the objection to that on Rousseau's own ground?

Student: From the *First Discourse*?

LS: Anywhere.

Student: There is morality.

LS: Yes. I would state it very simply: the anti-rationalism of Rousseau, of which we have found so many specimens. Not reason, but instinct, and all this kind of thing. Reason replaced by instinct or the heart. This is the difficulty, a fundamental contradiction, and we must see how it can be overcome. That Rousseau is aware of that is shown by the fact that in this very context he takes it up. Turn to page 21, bottom, and the top of page 22.

Student: The part about medicine?

LS: We will soon see that it is not medicine about which he is speaking. "I have no desire here to extend myself about the vanity of medicine."

Mr. Reinken: "My aim is to consider its bearings on morals. Still I cannot refrain from saying that men employ the same sophism about medicine as they do about the search for truth."

LS: Yes. Now, listen: for understanding that, forget about medicine, and see what Rousseau says about the search for truth. Then you will understand that. You see, that is the method which he frequently follows, that he uses an example which is plausible enough—some bad things can be said about medicine and physicians without any question—but the more interesting thing is the seemingly subordinate example, the quest for truth. Because the question is exactly this: can you educate all men to be men dedicated to the quest for truth, i.e. philosophers. Go on.

Mr. Reinken: "They assume that the patient is cured and that the seeker after truth finds it. They fail to see that against one life saved by the doctors you must set a hundred slain, and against the value of one truth discovered the errors which creep in with it. The science which instructs and the medicine which heals are no doubt excellent, but the science which misleads us and the medicine which kills us are evil. Teach us to know them apart. That is the real difficulty. If we were content to be ignorant of truth we should not be the dupes of falsehood; if we did not want to be cured in spite of nature, we should not be killed by the doctors. We should do well to steer

clear of both, and we should evidently be the gainers. I do not deny that medicine is useful to some men; I assert that it is fatal to mankind.”^{xliii}

LS: Exactly what he says about philosophy or science: science, philosophy, or whatever you call it, is good for some men and fatal for the human species. That is again the key point. Now let us turn to the third paragraph on page 22.

Mr. Reinken: “This lying art, invented rather for the ills of the mind than of the body, is useless to both alike; it does less to cure us of our diseases than to fill us with alarm. It does less to ward off death than to make us dread its approach. It exhausts life rather than prolongs it; should it even prolong life it would only be to the prejudice of the race, since it makes us set its precautions before society and our fears before our duties.”^{xliv}

LS: You see, he uses here species and society practically synonymously. Quest for truth is good for some men. The perfection of reason is good for some men. It is fatal for society. The perfection of reason is incompatible with the perfection of the species. Now I believe we can better understand what the *Emile* as a whole means. We must face the contradiction, and not explain it away—then we don’t understand anything. The contradiction is that Rousseau seems to proceed as if he were to educate a philosopher; but *Emile* can never be a philosopher. What then is the meaning of the book? Many of the absurdities of the book disappear when we understand that point. Rousseau, I would say, makes an experiment in the *Emile*, on the deepest level of the thing (there are also other uses of the book). He wants to show us the maximum perfection of reason which is possible in a man of the people in order to let us see the ceiling of the perfection of the people. This is the maximum which the non-philosopher¹¹ can reach; that is the meaning. I do not deny by this that the other educational considerations¹¹ are important, but they are not. I mean, many seemingly crazy things of the book become intelligible when you keep in mind this question.

This is I believe the key passage of the first book. In other words, it remains at the fundamental incompatibility of the perfection of reason and the perfection of society. [LS writes on the blackboard] I can state it now this way: Rousseau tries to bring about a convergence of something. At a certain point there is a sharp turn of the road, but this sharp turning of the road must be pictorially presented as follows: forget about this; *here* is the sharp turning of the road. The education of man is not led to its peak, but it is changed, altered in this direction. That I think is the meaning of the book. Now, there are a few pages in the sequel, very few, which we have to consider. On page 26, paragraph 4, we find a remark in the middle of the paragraph.

Student: “Of all creatures man is least fitted to live in herds.”^{xlv}

LS: Yes: man is the least gregarious of animals, which shows how extreme Rousseau is in his denial of man’s natural sociality. In other words, even lions or eagles are more gregarious than men are. I think common experience clearly contradicts that, and that is of course a great question. This is the fundamental defect of Rousseau’s teaching, the denial of man’s natural

^{xliii} E, 269-60; 181.

^{xliv} E, 270; 182.

^{xlv} E, 277; 187.

sociality. We have to find out, if we can, what compelled him, what drove him to make this atrocious assertion, this atrocious denial of man's natural sociality. Here Rousseau does not make a deliberate mistake; he makes a mistake pure and simple. But what drove him to that? What is the advantage of denying man's natural sociality, a denial which contradicts all experience which we have ever had? What is the advantage of that?

Student: Does this go back to this old virtue, the first idea of man's self, his spontaneity, his individuality?

LS: Yes, it has something to do with that, but I believe one can state it more simply as follows: if man is by nature social, that means he is always born into a society, and he enters that society by being born in it. He enters it conditionally; he is in no position to say, I am willing to enter this society if you guarantee me these and these things. What is demanded from him, his duties, precede any rights of his. These modern doctrines, from Hobbes to Rousseau via Locke—and the many lesser men who were all defending it up to the present day, with minor modifications—are very much concerned with the fact that man, i.e. every individual, can put *his* conditions for being a citizen to society. His rights come first, and the duties afterwards. And the only theoretical expression of that which is possible is that man is by nature asocial; it is a perfectly arbitrary and free act of his that he enters society. Then of course since this is the case, he can lay down the specifications. I mean the whole modern attempt to liberate the individual from all wants which do not arise from *his* will, his base will. Therefore the social contract is so crucial in modern times, although the thought is somewhat older, but it never had this full meaning. All obligations are fundamentally contractual. There are no natural obligations. We have to come back to this point later. We have to consider two more passages. On page 33, paragraph 2, “This disposition of children,” do you have that?

Mr. Reinken: “This tendency to anger, vexation, and rage needs great care. Boerhaave thinks that most of the diseases of children are of the nature of convulsions, because the head being larger in proportion and the nervous system more extensive than in adults, they are more liable to nervous irritation. Take the greatest care to remove from them any servants who tease, annoy, or vex them. They are a hundredfold more dangerous and more fatal than fresh air and changing seasons.”

LS: That is probably also an exaggeration. I mean, from the purely medical point of view, it is probably exaggerated.

Student: “When children only experience resistance in things and never in the will of man—”

LS: Literally, “in wills.”

Student: “and never in wills, they do not become rebellious or passionate, and their health is better. This is one reason why the children of the poor, who are freer and more independent, are generally less frail and weakly, more vigorous than those who are supposed to be better brought up by being constantly thwarted; but you must always remember that it is one thing to refrain from thwarting them, but quite another to obey them.”^{xlvi}

^{xlvi} E, 287; 195.

LS: Yes; in other words, anger is not natural. That is a bit exaggerated, I admit that, but he is driving in this direction. In other words, what Rousseau assumes is this—he gives this example occasionally. A child wants something. If you say, no, you have had enough, or something of this kind, then he will—since he doesn’t understand that, what it means to have enough—he will be angry. Then he will get resentment, and the whole pride and everything connected with that, self-assertion, will all develop. But if you say there is no longer any cake or candy, every child understands the objective impossibility of getting it, and then there will be no resentment. I believe that is a very dubious assertion. We will have to take this up. I think that is a key point in this [inaudible], that people, or children especially, get angry only if they are opposed by a will, and not by things. Why is this distinction wrong as Rousseau makes it?

Student: Kids kick chairs and tables.

LS: Exactly. They impute to chairs a will. Rousseau assumes the child—and also grown up people, but especially children—to be so rational as to be able to distinguish between willing and non-willing things; and therefore it is of no use. That is very crucial, and I think that is the most massive difference between Rousseau and Plato. For Plato, what he calls spiritedness or anger is one of the natural elements of man, and for Rousseau it comes up only by virtue of bad education.

Student: He tries to explain this chair business away, I think I remember reading in this chapter.

LS: In the first book, you mean?

Student: Yes; I’ll try to find it: “all wickedness comes from weakness.”^{xlvi}

LS: While you seek it, we will turn to another paragraph on page 34, bottom.

Mr. Reinken: “As the child grows it gains strength and becomes less restless and unquiet and more independent. Soul and body become better balanced and nature no longer asks for more movement than is required for self-preservation. But the love of power does not die—”

LS: “The love of commanding,”^{xlvi} I believe that is more telling than “the love of power.” “The love to command men does not become extinct.”

Mr. Reinken: “with the need that aroused it; power, or commanding, arouses and flatters self-love, and habit strengthens it; thus caprice follows upon need, and the first seeds of prejudice and obstinacy are sown.”^{xlvi}

LS: In other words, prejudices as prejudices originate in pride. Prejudices are not due so much to errors about facts as to pride. That is the same thing which Hobbes also meant; but this is of course not fully developed here. Yes?

^{xlvi} E, 288; 196.

^{xlvi} “*Désir de commander*” is the phrase translated.

^{xlvi} E, 289-90; 197.

Student: It's just in that paragraph above, when he talks about this destructive activity, this energy.

LS: Yes, but it is not destructive; it is not vicious. Sure; but that is the question. If we bring any example from experience where we seem to observe sheer vandalism and a desire to destroy, Rousseau would always say, well, you have already corrupted the child. You know, by nature it would simply be There is something to what Rousseau says; the child may of course destroy a thing and have no destructive intention, that is obvious. I mean, it may play around with a thing and just take it apart to see what is within it, and by this [inaudible] destroy it, and he has no destructive intention; we have this n times. But the question is whether it is really true that there is *never* viciousness, say, originating in anger, unless the child is confronted with a previous prohibition or command, with a previous exercise of authority which arouses *his* desire for authority in the form of rebellion. And as I say, the fundamental error which Rousseau makes is that the child can distinguish between wills and things, that the child is able in that early stage to see that things have no will; in other words, that it would never try to run with its head against the wall, because it knows that the wall is not impressed by that.

Student: Isn't there a difficulty in this? This is such a very obvious area of [inaudible] for Rousseau; and he even says so in many different intervals in the book, that he keeps looking around himself and taking account of sense experience. It would seem that he was aware of this, too. So how would he. . . ?

LS: No; until we come across such a passage, I would say he has simply misinterpreted the phenomena. You see, I would like to explain to you the root of such an error. I have discussed it very briefly in my chapter on Rousseau in *Natural Right and History*. I do not know whether I can now reconstruct it very well. Perhaps I start from today: when you talk today to the social scientist about something natural to man—and I am not speaking now of digestion and so on, but of passions—you will hear that this is not true: they are not natural. For example, have you ever read Ruth Benedict's *Patterns of Culture* [1934]? I read it once, so I have some first-hand knowledge. She takes this example: two red Indian tribes in North America, and the ones are tough and cruel, and the others are very kind. These kind people simply do not have any notion of violence.¹ One of the students yesterday after class told me that there is a tribe in South America, I believe; they don't have a word for killing. In other words, the notion of killing is so completely alien to these gentle people that they don't have a word for it. Generally, man is infinitely malleable. There is no human nature to speak of—of course [there is] the body, and also the most general features of sense-perception, but that is about all. The whole appetitive life is infinitely malleable; nothing can be said to be natural.

Now, the man who laid the foundation for that is Rousseau. According to Rousseau, the natural man proper, as you will recall, has only perfectibility, if we disregard the body; i.e. no particular development, or no particular road of perfection—or imperfection, for that matter—belongs naturally to him. Therefore, if this is so, it is defensible to say something is the product of education. There are many present-day social scientists, social psychologists, and so forth, who say that; let me see if I remember another example to use. In other words these two tribes, to

¹ Ruth Benedict, *Patterns of Culture*, (New York: Mariner Books, 2006.)

come back to Ruth Benedict, live under exactly the same climatic and other conditions, and the things available, the environment is the same. So, it cannot be understood by environment. Racially, they are of the same race; there is no reason available why they are different. The answer which she gives is this—I state it now a bit more exactly, I believe, than she does, and I state it in Greek terms: that [it] is the *nomos* which makes them that way. At the origin of these societies, or at some state, they *agreed* upon, say, toughness, or gentleness, and everything followed from that. There is no nature to speak of. Rousseau originated that. Hobbes's natural man still has a character; not a very attractive character, but he has a character, all right. But Rousseau's natural man is absolutely characterless, and that is what Rousseau calls good—I mean, he retracts that later on—and therefore, just as¹² people today say whenever someone has a nasty character, [badness is caused by] society, [a] broken home, and other more sophisticated explanations. But that man could really have in himself the roots both of kindness and nastiness, not affected in any way by his society—to some extent, but not fundamentally—and children brought up in the most unbroken homes, and by the most reasonably wealthy and decent parents, and I don't know what, and kept entirely away from evil impressions, there could still be a black sheep suddenly appearing; common experience shows it. Or if you want to put it in terms of natural science, the genes, these things might be in the genes, and not only prenatally, but even preconceptually, if I may say so.

Student: The thing is, though, that Rousseau himself was a tutor at one time; and even if at this point he didn't see a child kick a table, it is fair to say that at one point he must have. So why would he deny this common-sense evidence so blatantly in this book here, as well as in the rest of the book? He must have been able to think beyond this to a different point.

LS: That is a good question. In other words, your principle is this: no very intelligent man, as Rousseau so surely was, can have said simply nonsense. That is a good principle, I admit that; but still I can only say that the whole doctrine makes sense. But on the other hand if you take such a thing to say man is by nature asocial, that is really an absurd opinion; I mean, if you take it in the Hobbesian form where it goes together with the assertion that man is by nature also a nasty customer¹³. Now, how can Hobbes have said it? And then you see easily this: Hobbes is not precise enough. Hobbes proves, as it were, man's natural asociality by the power of anti-social passions—pride and everything belonging to that—but he did not reflect, did not consider that men can be anti-social only on the basis of a fundamental sociality. Very simple: if it is true that all viciousness arises from pride, the desire for superiority and recognition of that superiority, if man is by nature concerned with being superior to other men, then he is by nature social; because this being referred to others belongs to his nature. Now this is a grave theoretical error, and it is connected with the decay of what one can call metaphysics, or what Aristotle called philosophy. That he is unable to distinguish between asociality and antisociality is a grave error. Hobbes was surely a great man, but Hobbes said, really, certain absolutely fantastic things. That is one of them.

Now, once this movement started by Hobbes had proven to be attractive for some reasons—but powerful reasons—a tradition was established. In a way Rousseau grew up in that tradition, because the fellows of the *Encyclopédie* with whom he conversed were a kind of watered-down Hobbianism. Once such a tradition is established, this forces you into a certain direction, and then you really do not see sometimes the most obvious things; and the story of Andersen's about

the king who is naked, and everyone says he has clothes on, happens again. I believe if one—I say this without any nasty intention, although it will sound nasty—were to read and see statements by logical positivists, some of them quite intelligent men, you have exactly the same impression. Outside of the classroom they would not for a moment question these same things which they question in the classroom. This can even happen to [inaudible]. But I admit, if you can show us evidence that Rousseau has taken this into due consideration, then I have to revise what I said. Before you have shown that to me, I would not admit it.

Student: The only thing which I can offer just on the spur of the moment, but I think it's [inaudible], and that is either in the second or third book where there is the question of Emile's breaking windows; and the reason that Emile breaks windows can be traced back to the same idea as kicking a chair, or something like that. What Rousseau does is simply to leave Emile alone in the open. He finally gets so cold^{li}

LS: That would only mean how to cure him from anger, but it would not mean . . . in a very general way I have to answer, but I do not wish to present it now, because I would like for everyone

Student: Could I answer this question?

LS: Yes, do.

Student: I have an idea that when you read this you could give it a narrower implication, and therefore try to make it not nonsense. On page 33: "When children only experience resistance in things and never in the will of man, they do not become rebellious or passionate, and their health is better." If you read that not to mean that the causal thing here directly would be [inaudible], he is saying they become rebellious or passionate in the long run, but that follows from wills, whereas the chairs and so forth do not follow.

LS: I cannot agree with that, because there is this passage—which unfortunately I cannot find now; I should have made a note—where he says, no child has ever said anything when he was told there are no longer any candies or sweets. In other words, the objective impossibility of fulfilling his demand prevented the arising of any anger. I am sure that this is not true, but unfortunately . . . if any one has the passage, would he help me?^{lii}

Student: I just happened to notice that; if this translation is correct, it is in the paragraph right below.

LS: On which page is that, may I ask?

Student: Page 33 in the translation. It's actually the second paragraph, beginning, "When the child tries to seize something without speaking, he thinks he can reach the object, for he does not rightly judge its distance; when he cries and stretches out his hands he no longer misjudges the

^{li} See *E*, 333; 235, where Rousseau offers counsel on dealing with an ill-tempered child (not Emile). The passage does not appear to bear directly on the matter at hand.

^{lii} *E*, 320; 224.

distance, he bids the object approach.”^{liii} Now here, Rousseau is saying that the child imputes a will to objects.

LS: Very good. That is a very good point. Let me make a note of that. I am grateful to you for this reference. Wait; he hasn’t finished.

Student: It was just the second point: I didn’t quite understand the extent to which you wanted to say that Rousseau held that men were infinitely malleable. It is interesting to notice that he says that men have an innate sense—or that the child has an innate sense of justice. Of course, Aristotle would say that ideas of right and wrong are learned, wouldn’t he?

LS: Yes, not quite; that is complicated. But let us turn to that passage. It is where?

Student: On page 32, paragraph 7: “I shall never forget seeing one of these troublesome crying children thus beaten by his nurse. He was silent at once. I thought he was frightened, and said to myself, ‘This will be a servile being from whom nothing can be got but by harshness.’ I was wrong, the poor wretch was choking with rage, he could not breathe, he was black in the face.”

LS: Blue; “*violet*.” Go on.

Student: “A moment later there were bitter cries, every sign of the anger, rage, and despair of this age was in his tones. I thought he would die. Had I doubted the innate sense of justice and injustice in man’s heart, this one instance would have convinced me. I am sure that a drop of boiling liquid falling by chance on that child’s hand would have hurt him less than that blow, slight in itself, but clearly given with the intention of hurting him.”^{liv}

LS: Yes. I would say, do you think that that is a powerful proof of an innate sense of justice? What kind of justice is that? This has of course an old Platonic root; what Plato calls *thymos*. What is only translated by spiritedness shows itself—anger is the most common phenomenon—because we get angry. In every anger, Plato has said, there is a feeling, some injustice is done to me. So this is really a Platonic thought. But what is the basis of that? But you must not forget that is said by Socrates in the Platonic dialogues, and it is a part of a long argument which can be revised. Plato doesn’t say that this is *the* proof of an innate sense of justice. There cannot be a sense of justice in spiritedness; it can only be in reason, in the Platonic [inaudible]. This is not the same thing. Now what does he mean by that? If a man—and a rather decent man, of ordinary decency—is sure he deserved it, he will not get angry. So if a man of ordinary decency gets angry, he thinks a wrong has been done to him. To that extent, anger includes a sense of right which may be wrong in that particular case [inaudible]; but what Rousseau says, of course, goes much beyond that: the mere fact of anger. For example, take a thwarted gangster: he is of course angry. This fellow they got, Dido—or whatever his name was—[the man connected to the] beauty shop^{lv}. This fellow was of course very angry when he got caught; I saw over the TV how angry he was. But does it prove that he has an innate sense of the right? That factually does not

^{liii} *E*, 287; 195-96.

^{liv} *E*, 286-87; 195.

^{lv} “Dido” is perhaps a mistake for “Nick Guido,” a member of a Chicago gang involved in a series of home invasions (one of his accomplices worked in a beauty shop). He was arrested in 1962.

prove it. In itself it is an absurd statement, but that prepares later statements about such things. That is the first entering wedge of a long argument which we will pursue while we go on; therefore I did not bring up this particular passage. I had this in mind, whereas the passage you brought up I had not considered. No, I think now Mr. Reinken is first.

Mr. Reinken: To come out on Rousseau's side, that when children only experience these things, the clause can be read as "these conditions; but they are not becoming rebellious or passionate."^{lvi} And the first task of education is to get the child over the point where he imputes will to things. He tells you in the next paragraph, just wait out the storm; the child will learn what life is. "From this he will draw a conclusion suited to his age"—first lesson, really—"and there is no other way of suggesting it to him."^{lvii}

LS: Yes; but still I might say, what Rousseau says, I mean, that one cannot be angry unless one assumes a will in the difficulty which opposes you. That is the only definition, one could say, of anger, that we have anger when we are thwarted. Anger in contradistinction to desire. Desire is the primary phenomenon; and then if you are thwarted, the primary and¹⁴ [unreflective] reaction is anger. But this thwarting in anger, in *human* anger surely implies some will which thwarts you: when you hit the chair, you impute to the chair a will. Now we are all able to know that a chair doesn't have a will of its own, and therefore that it is absurd to kick the chair, except as a pure counter-reflection to get rid of the pain. You know, you inflict on yourself another pain to be less hurt. As such it could be a rational action; but as a punishment for the chair it is absurd. But the question is, can a child make the distinction? Does not a child—if one can say that at all, because it is much too undeveloped—animate everything, as Rousseau, in this passage to which our attention was drawn, says?

Student: Then he learns—at the end of that same passage—he learns that the [inaudible]. That is his first lesson.

LS: But let me say, by the way, in answer to your question, is it not possible that Rousseau had a certain obsession with equality and with men being free from any desire to lord it over others, or from any opposite desire to *be* lorded over, that this over-great concern could from time to time blind him to facts?

Student: It is possible. I would think that maybe this over-great concern [inaudible]. If this young baby were in the middle of the woods, he would not think of commanding the trees to move [inaudible]. It's because the baby has made the cry and had the mother or the nurse come to him that he also cries and hopes that the crib will come to him.

LS: Wait, I'm sorry. Mr. Mueller. I think I forgot you. Did you have a question?

^{lvi} Mr. Reinken seems to be translating loosely and in part from one sentence of the next paragraph, where Rousseau says that when "children find resistance only in things [Reinken translates "*choses*" as "conditions" instead] and never in wills, they will become neither rebellious nor passionate" (*E*, 287; 195).

^{lvii} *E*, 288; 196.

Mr. Mueller: I was thinking of the same thing. [Inaudible]. I was thinking, in the *Second Discourse* there is a description of the sense of justice which the savage had with regard to an evil man

LS: This question of the sense of justice we cannot possibly discuss today, because we have only the first mention of it here; and we must follow the fate, as it were, of the sense of justice in the following part. Mr. Morrison.

Mr. Morrison: One thing bothers me: do children ask things to come to them? I mean, where does he get this from? Does he remember himself doing it, or. . . .

LS: It is of course impossible. No, he tries to reconstruct it, I think, from the fact that the sense of distance which we have as grown up people is acquired, and this requires some use of reason. How can one see distances prior to the use of reason? Now, this was a subject with which people were much concerned—for example, Burke, and some other writers—namely, how do we get the notion, say, of a thing, of the objects, and so on, and how does the sense of

END OF TAPE

¹ Deleted “which.”

² Deleted “makes.”

³ Deleted “that.”

⁴ Deleted “written.”

⁵ Deleted “this least controllable, I mean.”

⁶ Deleted “necessarily opposed.”

⁷ Moved “he will attempt.”

⁸ Deleted “in the first.”

⁹ Deleted “successors.”

¹⁰ Deleted “the reason being.”

¹¹ Deleted “of him.”

¹² Deleted “if.”

¹³ Deleted “—in Hobbes.”

¹⁴ Deleted “unreflected.”

Session 6

[In progress] **Student:** —might be from “*emulation*.”

LS: No, I don’t think so. “Emulation” and “*Emile*”: this change from *u* to *i* would have to have the proper etymological basis, or else you arrive at a kind of etymology which they ridiculed in former times. The Greek word for fox is *alopex*, and then you say, cut off the *a*—the *a* is easily lost—and so you have *lopex*, and the *lo* is also lost; then you get *pex*, and that is almost fox.ⁱ

Student: [Inaudible]

LS: No, I think Aemilius is the only simple explanation.ⁱⁱ [Inaudible] and the question is whether there was not one of the many Aemilii who was not particularly admired by Rousseau. Surely not as much as Cato, but the name “Cato” would be unbearable as a first name in eighteenth century times. I believe the name Cato is now used—is it sometimes used for dogs, for big dogs?

Student: Not in America.

LS: I believe I have heard that as a dog’s name. Do you know it?

Student: I just think it would be a good name for a dog.

LS: You see that then. But I believe this view is particularly stern; that may be the reason why it is not actively used. But let us not waste time, as we don’t have any reliable data.

[Discussion that follows was not recorded]

Student: [I am] puzzled by his saying that one day the Profession of Faith of the Savoyard Vicar might cause a revolution among men.ⁱⁱⁱ He, too, is of course a theist who is attacking Christian teaching about immortality.

LS: Since this is in no way the subject of your assignment, you must have read something which [brought it to mind]. And in spite of the variety ofⁱ subject matter, there must be one or perhaps two even conflicting [inaudible]. Characteristic.

Student: He speaks of himself as a true . . . as a dreamer who is honest about his dreams.

LS: But this is not the overall theme of the second book of the *Emile*. What notion do we have of education in this book, since this is the theme of the *Emile*?

ⁱ The class is discussing why Rousseau may have chosen the name “Emile” for his imaginary pupil.

ⁱⁱ The most common explanation of Emile’s name is that he is named after the Aemilius Paulus described in Plutarch’s *Life of Aemilius Paulus*. However, as Strauss points out, there were many Aemilii.

ⁱⁱⁱ In the *Reveries*, Third Walk (Rousseau, 2000, p. 23).

Student: That this instruction must be negative. It must not consist of precepts. It will be by imitation, but the correct kind of imitation; Emile will only be taught that fundamental lesson of not harming others; that is the only positive teaching, the only positive moral teaching. His natural goodness [inaudible].

LS: Now, if I may take up something which you^{iv} mentioned, you said, if I understood you correctly, the education is a habituation, without reasons being given. And then later on when he is growing up, he will know the reason, and will be able to state the reason. Now, this is exactly what Plato and Aristotle meant—but there is a difference, obviously—what Plato and Aristotle understand as education: habituation, without reasons, because the child wouldn't understand the reason. But the difference is what? It is obvious. You have mentioned it, but I want you to repeat it.

Student: This training of the passions?

LS: That is the same in Plato and Aristotle. Everywhere.

Student: This distinction . . . liberty rather than authority . . .

LS: Yes, that has to do with that: no precepts. Plato and Aristotle of course say to the children “don't” and “do.” No precepts, that is the difference.

Student: There will be no mention of the word duty or obligation.

LS: These words are perhaps not intelligible to the small child, but “do” or “don't” are perfectly intelligible.

You emphasize the fact that right, not duty, is the fundamental thing. That is of course the Hobbean heritage. But you mentioned something else, in the earlier part of your paper, of Rousseau's relation to Hobbes, which I did not quite understand.

Student: When he says [that] our misery consists in the disproportion of our desires and our faculties. The felicity of man here below is therefore only a negative state: we do not know absolute happiness or absolute misfortune. But we are not therefore to find human wisdom and the road of true happiness [by merely limiting]² our desires, for that would be a limitation of our being.^v

LS: Well, first, by simple contrast, that is what Plato, Aristotle, the Stoics and the Epicureans would have said: limit your desires; otherwise you will always be unhappy. Rousseau says, “no, don't limit your desires.” And how does he [propose one remedy the disproportion]?

Student: Diminishing the excess of desires over faculties.

^{iv} Strauss refers to a seminar paper, evidently Mr. Mueller's, that was not recorded.

^v *E*, 303-4; 210-11.

LS: Yes, and what is the result of that? Wisely limited desires lead to something which we may call “happiness.” If it is impossible to limit the desires, unhappiness. Now, where does Hobbes come in at this point?

Student: We are inevitably unhappy because our desires always exceed our powers; there is no ultimate end; there is no highest good.

LS: Sure, but how does it work out? That is very general. I mean, also in the case of a reasonable man. First of Hobbes, in the case of a reasonable man, will³ [such a man] also be unhappy, according to Hobbes? Will he, too, be unable to limit his desires?

Student: Rousseau seems to point to the state where there is an equilibrium, a final state. Apparently a life of—

LS: Let us not speculate: Rousseau says [that] happiness is possible, contrary to Hobbes. We must try to understand that.

Student: By means of the general will . . .

LS: But he hasn’t spoken of that here.

Student: Oh, yes.

LS: He has? I haven’t seen it.

Student: As far as the social order goes, at least.^{vi}

Student: May I volunteer an impression of this first bit?

LS: Yes.

Student: It seems surprising, but the tutor is busy using guile and trickery on Emile.

LS: Decidedly.

Student: And before the examples began, there was what seemed a most pregnant phrase, on the top of page 53: “With the age of reason the child becomes the slave of the community.”^{vii} It seems that this pointed to the place where one of the two lines^{viii} had to be bent—[inaudible] civil order—and on this page you begin to wonder if duty will ever really be founded on philosophic reason, if concepts of duty are more than conventional. It simply is questionable [inaudible]. And as we go through⁴ [such] things as the Maltese melons and the broken windows, we see that despite what was done before, the child was not to feel wills, but unquestionably

^{vi} The student presumably has *E*, 311; 216-17 in mind.

^{vii} *E*, 316; 221.

^{viii} The two “lines” being the education of man and the education of the citizen—Rousseau is trying to make them converge.

wills are being forced on him. He is being made to recognize them, slightly fraudulently, with [an] iron hand.

LS: Yes, that is surely true. We have to take this up, there is no question.

Student: Isn't this connected with the idea, especially, of property? He says it is impossible, he believes, even in the country, to bring up anyone without notions of conventional morality; and the true morality must be taught, but there is always something false about it. It seems to me to be obvious from this.

LS: Let us see whether it is or not. I believe it has something to do with the question we discussed last time at some length: is a child able to distinguish between wills and fate or things? That is the question. If he is unable to distinguish, he cannot but become a potential tyrant, if Rousseau's psychology is correct. If the refusal—No!—the refusal, but in the authoritative sense—no, I don't do it because I don't wish to do it—if this corrupts a man, then all children are born to become corrupted, because they meet it sooner or later. Even Emile meets it. We have to take this up later. Now, Mr. Lane, you want to say something?

Mr. Lane: The discussion has taken so many turns I don't know if what I have to say is relevant. I was thinking about the unlimited desire in relation to Hobbes, and the state of chaos which would result.

LS: Yes, but what does Hobbes mean by that? That is a point which of course is relevant. Does any one of you remember the phrase of Hobbes? I myself don't remember it literally, but roughly: there is in every man a desire for power after power, that ceaseth only in death.^{ix} Now, if there is such a desire in every man, whether he is reasonable or unreasonable, a desire which can never be fulfilled,⁵ [then] man is naturally unhappy, and there cannot be happiness proper. Hobbes certainly said that. He said [that] there is no possibility of a *summum bonum*, of a highest good or felicity. There is only a kind of felicity, which is when, in each effort to get more power, you are successful. Then that is the kind of happiness which is possible. But that is a happiness not of repose, but of motion, movement. Ever to outdistance the one before us, or something of this kind, this is felicity. In the *Elements of Law* is this comparison of human life to a race: he who wins all races.^x

Student: This is connected with Mr. Mueller's foresight, this unlimited fear of foresight.

LS: Yes, and Rousseau somehow believes—although he starts from a Hobbean basis—he believes felicity or happiness is nevertheless possible. We have discussed this already in an earlier meeting; namely, by analyzing the motive of this race: in the case of sensible men, self-preservation, for which you need power. And if self-preservation is based itself on the awareness of the sweetness of mere living, then if you cease to act and surrender yourself to the basic

^{ix} Hobbes, 1994, Chapter 11, para. 2, p. 58.

^x See Thomas Hobbes, *The Elements of Law, Natural and Politic* (Whitefish, MT: Kessinger, 2004), 34 (Part 1, Chap. 9, Sec. 21). Felicity there is “continually to out-go the next.”

feeling of existence, as he called it, then you are happy. This inverted beatific vision, to quote Mr. Reinken, this is Rousseau's way out.^{xi}

But I think we should now begin with a coherent discussion of this assignment. Can we learn any lesson from Mr. Mueller's presentation? I believe we can. Every one of us should keep in mind the results of the previous discussion, not in the sense that they should be made the dogmatic basis, but they should be used as a hypothesis to be validated or invalidated by further reading. Then we have some provisional clarity and a coherent view of what we read, because otherwise we will be simply overwhelmed by the details.

Now, let us begin with a passage near the beginning, on page 42, fourth paragraph. "Another progress makes for children complaint less necessary; and that is the progress of their forces." Do you have that?

Mr. Reinken: "They can do more for themselves, they need the help of others less frequently. With strength comes the sense to use it. It is with this second phase that the real personal life has its beginning; it is then that the child becomes conscious of himself. During every moment of his life memory calls up the feeling of self; he becomes really one person, always the same, and therefore capable of joy or sorrow. Hence we must begin to consider him as a moral being."^{xii}

LS: Yes. In other words, as a new-born baby, he is not a moral being. He becomes a moral being in what sense? Of course not in the sense of being capable of being aware of duties; that is out of the question. Because he is capable of feeling happiness and unhappiness. The implication being that an animal does not feel happiness or unhappiness; it feels pains and pleasure.^{xiii} And what is that which distinguishes man from animal?

Student: Memory.

LS: Yes, that *seems* to be memory. But [it is] self-consciousness. In other words, the condition for feeling happy or unhappy is consciousness of oneself, [inaudible] i.e. to be truly one. An animal is not truly one; that is the implication. True unity requires self-consciousness, awareness that you are one. Is that what he means? I understood it to mean, and I believe now I was wrong, that memory would be decisive. But this would not make sense, would it? Because animals too have memory. So memory is only an ingredient of this self-consciousness. It is not the sufficient condition for it. So let us leave it at this, and I won't tell you the erroneous conclusions which I drew from my false reading.

Now, let us continue here. Next paragraph.

Mr. Reinken: "Although we know approximately the limits of human life and our chances of attaining those limits, nothing is more uncertain than the length of the life of any one of us. Very few reach old age. The chief risks occur at the beginning of life; the shorter our past life, the less

^{xi} It appears that Strauss refers to a part of the third session that was not transcribed.

^{xii} *E*, 301; 208.

^{xiii} But see the Preface of the *Second Discourse*, in which man "is subject to some sort of duties toward" animals, who "ought to participate in natural right" (*SD*, 126; 15).

we must hope to live. Of all the children who are born scarcely one half reach adolescence, and it is very likely your pupil will not live to be a man. What is to be thought, therefore, of that cruel education—”

LS: “barbarous education.”

Mr. Reinken: “barbarous education which sacrifices the present to an uncertain future, that burdens a child with all sorts of restrictions and begins by making him miserable, in order to prepare him for some far-off happiness which he may never enjoy?”^{xiv}

LS: Let us stop here. This is, I believe, also a passage which you had in mind. But what does he have in mind here, what general view? I do not believe that we are compelled to think of eternal happiness here.

Student: I was bothered by this. I am sure he means, I’m sure there are two levels. I’m sure it is to be taken literally first, and I thought it means—

LS: Yes, you have to take it literally. What does it immediately mean in this context, according to his explicit presentation?

Student: There are no good instructions in the duties of man if he will never grow to a man’s estate.

LS: Yes. In other words, you must not regard childhood as a preparation for adulthood. That is crucial for the whole thing. Of course this can only be qualifiedly true, but he is trying to make this as much as possible true. But what is the principle behind that?

Student: He turns much later in the book to: “Everything has its own proper maturity. We have seen such things as a well-made man, but ah! a well-made child, that would be a rare thing indeed.”^{xv}

LS: Yes, in other words, there is no peak. If we take the simple Aristotelian notion [LS goes to the blackboard]: every being has an origin, a peak, and a decay. You can see it very clearly in the case of animals; the case of man is a bit more complicated, but fundamentally there too. And so you cannot possibly say the decline is in the service of the peak. It comes too late for that, to be in the service. But *this* is a preparation for the *acme*, for the peak. Childhood, babyhood, or whatever stages are preparation. That is a common view of mankind. To some extent even today, in our corrupt age; but surely in former times there was no question. This Rousseau questions. And what is the fundamental reason, why *must* he question it in some way or other, although he cannot question it consistently?

Student: Perhaps because the sweetness of existence is the child’s pleasant—

LS: No, something more general. What does this imply, this simple schema?

^{xiv} E, 301-2; 208.

^{xv} E, 418; 301; the student is paraphrasing.

Student: Development.

LS: Development everyone has.

Student: An end.

LS: End, end: a teleological view. And with a questioning of the teleological view, this has to be questioned. The equality of all stages, just as we have today the equality of all ages in historicism, the equality of all cultures, civilizations, in anthropology, that is the consequence. There is no inherent order in things. No inherent order in things. Strictly speaking you can't even say animate beings are higher than inanimate beings; you can only say that they are more complex, more complicated. Mr. Seltzer.

Mr. Seltzer: How is this compatible with his view that it is unnatural for a child to be ruler of a man?^{xvi}

LS: That is a good point. Whereas he *would* say of course that it is natural for mature people somehow to rule children. But still, when you look at it from this angle, to what extent does he admit the naturalness of a grown-up man to rule a child? That is greatly questioned, you know? Something has to be done, because a baby is helpless and has to be taken care of; but this should be as little rule as possible, you know? There are certain facts which are undeniable, and whatever one's theoretical preference may be, one has to admit them. But Rousseau tries, moves in this direction, to understand as much as possible. It can be possible only within limits to understand childhood as autonomous, so to speak. Mr. Mueller.

Mr. Mueller: Well, autonomous, yes—

LS: As much as possible.

Mr. Mueller: Yes, but still there is a natural order of things, though he may put no content into that strata, and it may be only a phrase. And still the tutor's will is to be a law of brass.

LS: To what extent does this contradict what I said? What is the precise point?

Mr. Mueller: It doesn't, I guess, except—

LS: Because I admitted that there cannot be a complete . . . he cannot carry it through completely, the equality of childhood and adulthood. But he tries to approach it. Mr. Seltzer.

Mr. Seltzer: It has a good deal to do with the child's weakness, doesn't it?

LS: Obviously; naturally.

Mr. Seltzer: I think he reduces it to that, doesn't he?

^{xvi} See *SD*, 194; 67.

LS: Yes, as much as possible. But we must find a better formula for this vague expression “as much as possible,” and we must gradually see what that is. Only one thing we must keep in mind: that the teleology, while still subsisting in Rousseau, is qualified, [as] we will find. If we do not see that we will not understand him. In this connection I would say this: Rousseau uses a lot of medical and so-called biological material; and for the biological material, he depends on the famous French naturalist, Buffon, whom he quotes frequently. Now, I haven’t studied him—I should have—and it would be interesting to see to what extent the modern mechanical physics has made any inroads on the understanding of the living beings in Buffon. I do not know; it would be interesting. I mention this only in passing.

In the sequel, on page 43, paragraph two towards the end, and paragraph three. You see, towards the end of paragraph two, he speaks of the “pleasure of being,” which is translated somewhat differently by⁶ [her]: “As soon as they are able to sense, to feel, the pleasure of being, make that^{xvii} they enjoy it.” And he criticizes in the following paragraph those, or him “who always regards the present as nothing.”^{xviii} The surrender to the present; forgetting about the future, about foresight; enjoying existence as existence: that belongs together. But this I mention only in passing. We must now turn to this question of happiness which was mentioned by Mr. Mueller. Page 44, at the end of the second paragraph. Let us only read the beginning of this paragraph: “We know what. . .”

Mr. Reinken: “absolute good and evil are.”

LS: “absolute happiness or unhappiness is.” We do not know what that is. I don’t know, you see. Spanking.^{xix} Good. Read the end of this paragraph: “Always more sufferings than enjoyments.”

Mr. Reinken: “Ever more sorrow than joy—this is the lot of all of us. Man’s happiness in this world is but a negative state; it must be reckoned by the fewness of his ills.”^{xx}

LS: Literally, “by the smallest quantity of evils which he suffers.” That is, the happiest man [is he] who has the smallest number of evils; not in positive terms, who has the maximum of enjoyment. So we must start from that if we try to understand Rousseau. Rousseau is not a simple hedonist who understands by a good life a life with the maximum of pleasures, but rather a somewhat more sophisticated view, one can say, the vulgar understanding of Epicureanism: pleasure is the absence of pain—nothing positive—which is not Epicurus’s doctrine, but it was understood this way already in classical antiquity. Pleasure is the absence of pain, and therefore he who has the minimum of pains, has the maximum of pleasure, is the happiest of men. This of course has something connected with Hobbes, has something do to with Hobbes. Hobbes says there is no highest good, no greatest good, but there is a greatest evil. And Locke says desire is always moved by evil, not by good. This view enters somehow Rousseau’s thought. “Desire is

^{xvii} Strauss’s translation of *faites que*.

^{xviii} *E*, 302; 209-10.

^{xix} The punishment Strauss proposed for poor translation in Session Five. The terms in question are *bonheur* and *malheur*.

^{xx} *E*, 303; 210.

always moved by evil, to fly it.”^{xxi} But Rousseau does not leave it at that. Let us read the next paragraph.

Mr. Reinken: “Every feeling of hardship is inseparable from the desire to escape from it; every idea of pleasure from the desire to enjoy it. All desire implies a want, and all wants are painful; hence our wretchedness consists in the disproportion between our desires and our powers. A conscious being whose powers were equal to his desires would be perfectly happy.”^{xxii}

LS: He says “a sensible being,” sensible in the sense of a being which is capable to sense. So, ⁷absolute happiness is then possible. Rousseau corrects himself, as it were. Absolute happiness would be equality of faculties and desires. That can make some sense: desire only what is in your power, then you will be happy. The old Stoic formula, *Stoic* formula: desire only what is *eph' hêmin*, what is within our power. This is not Rousseau's view, although there are very many strange reminiscences of Stoic ethics. But it is not a Stoic teaching, as we see in the immediate sequel. Let us go on.

Mr. Reinken: “What then is human wisdom? Where is the path of true happiness? The mere limitation of our desires is not enough—”

LS: Yes, now here he parts company with the Stoics and anything else.

Student: “for if they were less than our powers, part of our faculties would be idle, and we should not enjoy our whole being; neither is the mere extension of our powers enough, for if our desires were also increased we should only be the more miserable. True happiness consists in decreasing the difference between our desires and our powers, in establishing a perfect equilibrium between the power and the will. Then only, when all its forces are employed, will the soul be at rest and man will find himself in his true position.”^{xxiii}

LS: So, not by diminishing our desires (because he doesn't make any distinction among desires, he only discusses the general formula, the desires [in general], and says the diminishing will not do because we would render inactive some of our desires, and this is not good). Not all our forces would come into play. What he says, in other words, up to this point is this: happiness is the actuality of all our faculties. If all our faculties are actualized, then we are happy. Of course they may not be actualized through external impediments, through deceit and⁸ [whatever else], and then we are unhappy. So, the simple formula would seem to be up to this point—up to this point—the Aristotelian formula rather than any Epicurean or hedonistic one. Happiness: the actualization of all our faculties. Now, Aristotle in his wisdom had of course made a certain qualification, when he said [that] the actualization of all our faculties, or the virtues, are happiness. What did he say? What was his famous qualification? Can everyone be happy?

Student: We have to have the natural—

^{xxi} John Locke, *Essay on Human Understanding*, Book 2, Ch. 11, Sec. 71.

^{xxii} *E*, 303-4; 211.

^{xxiii} *E*, 304; 211.

LS: Yes, but assuming that. In a way that is common to all normal men. But what is the impediment?

Student: Equipment?

LS: Equipment. *Choregia*.^{xxiv} So, happiness is, if we present this in a nice formula symbolically—[blackboard] happiness equals virtue plus equipment. I write it with a small *e*, because Aristotle puts the emphasis on virtue. But without, for example, health, without a certain minimum of wealth and so, one cannot be happy in the Aristotelian sense. So, Rousseau seems to abstract here entirely from that, and something else. Aristotle of course does not hesitate to say that we must diminish our desires. Of course we must. Even if we could indulge all kinds of desires, some of these desires should not be indulged in under any circumstances. Now, Rousseau knows that, and we are still on the way. We read now the sequel to this.

Mr. Reinken: “In this condition, nature, who does everything for the best, has placed him from the first. To begin with, she gives him only such desires as are necessary for self-preservation and such powers as are sufficient for their satisfaction. All the rest she has stored in his mind as a sort of reserve, to be drawn upon at need.”

LS: In other words, the faculties which a baby can develop are only few. Others remain potential, until he somewhat grows up. We still speak here in terms of faculties and their development, of potencies and their actualization. Yes.

Mr. Reinken: “It is only in this primitive condition that we find the equilibrium between desire and power, and then alone man is not unhappy. As soon as his potential powers—”

LS: He says “virtual,” but it is of course the same. That is the same. So, you see, it is really the language of Aristotelian philosophy which is still spoken. Yes.

Mr. Reinken: “As soon as his potential powers of mind begin to function, imagination, more powerful than all the rest, awakes, and precedes all the rest. It is imagination which enlarges the bounds of possibility for us, whether for good or ill, and therefore stimulates and feeds desires by the hope of satisfying them. But the object which seemed within our grasp flies quicker than we can follow; when we think we have grasped it, it transforms itself and is again far ahead of us. We no longer perceive the country we have traversed, and we think nothing of it; that which lies before us becomes vaster and stretches still before us. Thus we exhaust our strength, yet never reach our goal, and the nearer we are to pleasure, the further we are from happiness.”^{xxv}

LS: Skip the next paragraph and read the one following.

Mr. Reinken: “The world of reality has its bounds, the world of imagination is boundless; as we cannot enlarge the one, let us restrict the other; for all the sufferings which really make us miserable arise from the difference between the real and the imaginary. Health, strength, and a

^{xxiv} Aristotle, *Nicomachean Ethics*, 1099a34.

^{xxv} *E*, 304; 211.

good conscience excepted, all the good things of life are a matter of opinion; except bodily suffering and remorse, all our woes are imaginary.”

LS: “Remorse of conscience,” to make it quite clear. Yes.

Mr. Reinken: “You will tell me this is a commonplace; I admit it, but its practical application is no commonplace, and it is with practice only that we are now concerned.”^{xxvi}

LS: Now, let us try to understand that. We had this general suggestion that the actualization of all our faculties is happiness. This must now be qualified. There is one of our faculties which makes us miserable, and that is imagination. The actualization of imagination causes misery; and imagination is somehow here understood as equivalent with opinion, as you see. This is the point. And the practical meaning: only the pains of the body and the pangs of conscience are genuine evils. All other evils are imaginary.

Now, consider what that means. What about the death of one's parents? What about these evils enumerated by Hamlet in his soliloquy? Are these all imaginary evils? What a Stoic, our friend Jean-Jacques! Only the Stoics would not even have mentioned the pains of the body among the evils. So, he is a little bit less Stoic. Does he intend to educate a philosopher—in the late, ancient sense—who is immune to all evils external to the man himself? Yes. We know it: he wishes to educate the sovereign individual, and therefore he takes this view. On page 45 at the end of the third paragraph, you find a statement which I believe is helpful.

Mr. Reinken: “Let us measure the extent of our sphere and remain in its center like the spider in its web; we shall have strength sufficient for our needs, we shall have no cause to lament our weakness, for we shall never be aware of it.”^{xxvii}

LS: He will always be sufficient to himself. Self-sufficiency, this is the standard. Self-sufficiency, but interpreted in a way which is neither Stoic—because then there would be no pains of the body—nor Aristotelian—then the other good things of life would of course also have to be considered, like, say, attachment to other human beings, which are completely disregarded here.

Student: Spinozist?

LS: Yes, one can say that, perhaps. I was reminded on some other occasions of Spinoza. But let us go on. In the next paragraph, please. We will read only the beginning and the end of this paragraph.

Mr. Reinken: “The other animals possess only such powers as are required for self-preservation; man alone has more.”

LS: “Has superfluous faculties.” And the last sentence.

^{xxvi} *E*, 305; 211-12.

^{xxvii} *E*, 305; 212.

Mr. Reinken: “If a man were content to live, he would live happy; and he would therefore be good, for what would he have to gain by vice?”^{xxviii}

LS: So, the key point, it seems to me, is the statement [that] man has superfluous faculties. We have seen it before: imagination is a faculty, and he proved it bad. Man has superfluous faculties. You remember now perhaps the statement in the *Second Discourse* when he described these savages in this beautiful condition, and where the faculties of men were not yet developed, fully developed. And the full development of these faculties leads to misery of the human species. Do you remember that? Here you have also superfluous faculties, because their development leads to misery. And that of course is a great qualification of the teleology: there are faculties which are superfluous. That is a famous objection made to a simple version of Aristotle: well, I shall assume that every organ is necessary for human well-being; what about the famous appendix, without which many people live so happily? So that is a superfluous thing. So here, that is the key point: men have superfluous faculties. But which are superfluous? The extreme formula: man should limit himself to life, to mere life, and then he will be happy.

Now, let us contrast this with Aristotle. Aristotle would of course say “man has no superfluous faculties: he must develop all his faculties, but in their proper order, for the sake of the good life.” And this notion of the faculties, as Aristotle says, implies that man is by nature a political or social animal. Now, let us first see how this is affected by Hobbes: man is *not* by nature a political or social animal; society is entirely conventional. Man is by nature asocial, because he is by nature antisocial, or proud. Man is therefore by nature miserable, because that pride belongs to his nature. *The principle of the sound life is self-preservation: concern with mere life, and liberating oneself, as it were, from pride. But—and this is the implication—this concern with mere life, and doing everything for that, is indeed incompatible with happiness as a state of contentedness. Man can never be content. And if contentedness is an implication of happiness, Hobbesian man is always miserable.*

Now, on the basis of Hobbes, Rousseau tries to find the possibility of happiness in the sense of contentedness; and the solution is partly implied by Hobbes: liberation from pride, concern with the opinions others have of us, imagination. For some reason Rousseau seems to believe that opinion and imagination go together. In opposition to Hobbes, Rousseau thinks that the liberation from pride and opinion is sufficient not only for self-preservation, but also for happiness. This seems to be the connection. Whether Rousseau can leave it at that, we must see. But this is the point. So, in a way, he agrees with Aristotle and the classics: happiness is possible, as a state of contentedness. But his understanding of that happiness, of the substance of that happiness, is radically different. Did you want to say something?

Student: Did you say that Rousseau said mere life was happiness?

LS: Read him: “Every man who wished only to live would live as a happy being; hence he would live as a good man, for where would he have any advantage in being evil?”^{xxix} I repeat the decisive sentence: “Every man who wished only to live would live as a happy being.” Good. But interpreted and developed on the basis of what one can know from other utterances of Rousseau,

^{xxviii} *E*, 305, 306; 212.

^{xxix} Strauss retranslates the last sentence of the paragraph under consideration.

it means of course not the mere life, as then all men would be happy. But he doesn't say that: men who had no *wish* but to live. You see, someone who is drudging, say, in some terrible uranium mine in Siberia, or whatever you take, he is of course miserable, because he is not satisfied with mere being. If he were satisfied with that, it wouldn't make any difference to him whether he lives in that uranium mine, or whether he lives in the Kremlin ruling millions of people.

Student: He says that primitive man can have a certain degree of happiness. But don't you think he would also agree with Aristotle, and say that if he developed his faculties [he could be happier?] The primitive man hasn't developed all his faculties; therefore Rousseau might say that that happiness which consisted in the coming together of one's desires and the ability to fulfill those desires when the faculties were developed would⁹ [be] a greater happiness than that of the primitives.

LS: Yes, probably. I believe that too. But nevertheless it would be as it were a return on the highest stage of man's intellectual development to something which in its core can be experienced by every human being, and even by an animal.

Student: In that sense, too, happiness is not mere life for Rousseau, is it?

LS: He calls it—he has no better word for it than “sentiment of existence”; “sentiment of mere living.” That is difficult.

Student: I just wanted to get clear that . . . wouldn't bodily suffering of course be a pain? I mean, the man in Siberia might be suffering bodily pain . . .

LS: Yes, sure, Rousseau would admit that. Mr. Butterworth, you wanted to say something?

Mr. Butterworth: I think that part of the answer on this question might come from the passage that you read a couple of times ago, Chapter 8, Book 1 of the [*Social*] *Contract*, where man definitely would be happier in developing all his things if his society—^{xxx}

LS: Does he say “happy”? He becomes truly a human being; but does he say “happy”? That is the question.

Student: Would there be an inconsistency between Rousseau saying that if a man had no wish but to live he would be happy and the point that you have been raising, that happiness was a balance between faculties and desires? Because presumably man is by nature capable of more than mere life, so that this desire to just live would be *prima facie* out of balance with faculties.

LS: You mean the non-developed faculties, as it were, would create inner pain? That is what you mean. Yes, but on the other hand, some of the faculties are superfluous. So the pain that non-development might create is better than the much greater pain which the development creates. I think we must really leave it for the time being at this point,¹⁰ admitting the very great difficulties if we want to understand him. In other words, Rousseau has found a notion of

^{xxx} Rousseau, 1994, 8.1, p. 141.

happiness. By the way, we have not discussed one element yet: the remorse of conscience, the pangs of conscience. What is going to [take care of that?] Well, of course Rousseau would say, this man who does not have any desire but to live will not take away anything from anybody else; therefore he will always have a good conscience. So he would not be bothered by this point. Mr. Mueller?

Mr. Mueller: When he says . . . a few pages over, he brings in the cure for social evils, the substitution of law for the individual and arming the general will.

LS: Where is that? On which page?

Student: On page 49.^{xxx}

LS: Let us wait. But, all right, yes?

Student: He also speaks of the resignation of primitive man before death, which the non-willing of the Stoics cannot approach.^{xxx}

LS: Yes, sure: death is the absolute limit; but, in other words, if death destroys all possible human pleasures, as is here assumed, then the only reasonable thing to do is to get reconciled to death. This is what the Stoics in their way said, and what Rousseau says.

Student: But they can't do it, this is my point.

LS: Why not?

Student: They cannot approach the feeling of [resignation that primitive men feel]. This is only to say that the equality or equilibrium of desires and faculties is only in the primitive state.

LS: But there is no power to prevent dying; and therefore he who wants to live always, on earth at least, is bound to be miserable. Because the greatest misery always threatens him; and therefore if he does not become reconciled to death as an inevitable necessity, he will always be unhappy.

Student: Could you go over once again what the Stoic view of happiness is?

LS: Perfect self-sufficiency. Even if you have the most terrible pains—the famous Stoic, I think it was Panaetius, or was it Posidonius^{xxx}, who had terrible pains, gout and gallstones at the same time, and he claimed still to be happy in the midst of that. Rousseau does not go so far. Rousseau had all kinds of bodily ills, and he would say “no, bodily ills are too much; they are genuine,” just as Hobbes says. Hobbes also makes the distinction, by the way, between

^{xxx} *E*, 311; 217.

^{xxx} *E*, 306-7; 213.

^{xxx} It's Posidonius.

imaginary evils and true evils, and true evils are bodily evils. I forgot now—it is somewhere in the *Leviathan*.^{xxxiv} It is very clear. So this we accept.

So let us see; we have not yet a complete picture of Rousseau's notion of happiness. We proceed step by step. Let us read this passage at page 46, beginning of paragraph 4, a sentence quoted by Mr. Mueller.

Mr. Reinken: "Prudence!"

LS: No, "foresight."

Student: "Foresight! Foresight which is ever bidding us look forward into the future, a future which in many cases we shall never reach; here is the real source of all our troubles!"^{xxxv}

LS: Yes. Positively expressed: if you are satisfied with living now, enjoy the sweetness of existence, and do not think beyond it. That is the only happiness possible. In the moment you are worried¹¹ [about] how you can continue that feeling of existence in the future, in the moment you become concerned with self-preservation, unhappiness enters inevitably.

Student: Is this connected with the New Testament idea of let tomorrow's troubles . . . sufficient unto today?

LS: Yes, but not in this way. Here, what is suggested in the passage about the lilies? What does that mean?

Student: Pardon?

LS: The passage about the lilies in the field.^{xxxvi} What is suggested here? Not worry too much. But not the extreme which Rousseau takes. The New Testament doesn't teach that the mere feeling of existence is the only possible happiness. I mean that there is . . . from every point of view, one cannot possibly approve of constant worry. I mean, even in the proverbial ethic: let us cross that bridge when we come to it. If you worry about every bridge you *might* cross, you would be constantly in misery. Mr. Morrison?

Mr. Morrison: [Does Rousseau have] some kind of a notion—I don't know if he gets around to this later on—but the idea that to be conscious of the problem of happiness at all is to make happiness impossible, as you might say? It presents a . . . that places an obstacle in the way of happiness, that to reach a higher level of consciousness, once you are up there, you are in trouble. If you are just living as the lilies of the field, if you are just being a natural man, just working, and not worrying, and not philosophizing and not generalizing and thinking nasty abstract thoughts—would Rousseau say that such a person could be happy precisely because he wasn't thinking about whether he was happy or not?

^{xxxiv} Hobbes, 1994, Chapter 27, para. 20, p. 196.

^{xxxv} *E*, 307; 213.

^{xxxvi} Matthew 6:28.

LS: No. What will happen to him is this: he will be compelled [to think about it]. I mean, men must think of self-preservation, that comes out. And therefore he will be compelled to enter society—and there is Mr. Mueller’s point—i.e. a source of unhappiness. So, the only happiness of which man is actually capable is that of not remaining below the level of the citizen, below the level of Cato, to take the great example¹² [of the citizen], but to transcend it. And that is the preserve of a very small number of people; Rousseau would of course include himself.

What Rousseau¹³ [offers] is, in other words, in a modified form—in a radically modified form—is the Aristotelian notion of—in the *Nicomachean Ethics*—[the] end. The political or practical life, [the] actuality of moral-political virtue, is happiness; it requires equipment. And then there is something transcending it, the theoretical life, which requires equipment to a much lesser degree.^{xxxvii} Because Aristotle thinks of course of a man who is politically active in the highest possible form: a statesman, when you must be, in the schema which Aristotle assumes, well-born, of reasonable wealth, and must have family. All worries, you know? But the theoretical man as theoretical man is beyond these worries; he needs equipment to a much lesser degree, and this is a higher form of [existence]. This is, you can say, what is behind Rousseau. But Rousseau cannot maintain the supremacy of the theoretical life as Aristotle understood it—we will try to find the reasons—and therefore he gets this upside-down theoretical life, which is the sentiment of existence.

Student: But would Rousseau say that the unhappiness of people who do not have the capacity to go up to this top level is increased by being pushed above a certain level as if they were going to get there, when they can’t?

LS: No, no; what happens here, but which cannot yet be developed, is this: there are of course enormous compensations in being a citizen. I mean, speaking purely from a point of view of happiness, or even of pleasures, the pleasure of self-love, of *amour-propre*—especially of pride—come in. Patriotic pride, for example, will compensate for many hardships, not only of civilian peace-time life, but even of soldiers’ wartime life and dying for the country. This kind of thing, you know. As Rousseau says somewhere, he cannot say everything simultaneously,^{xxxviii} and this has one advantage: we can really follow the steps of the argument better. Pardon?

Student: This latest statement sounds like Lasswell.^{xxxix}

LS: Yes, well, there is a connection between Lasswell . . . but who ever said that Lasswell says nonsense always? No one ever said that. Good. Turn to the bottom of page 46, when he describes the miserable life we lead since we are not wise.

Mr. Reinken: “Thus we grasp everything, we cling to everything; we are anxious about time, place, people, things, all that is and will be; we ourselves are but the least part of ourselves.”^{xl}

^{xxxvii} Aristotle, *Nicomachean Ethics*, 1178a25.

^{xxxviii} In the *Social Contract*, 2, 5. See, Rousseau, 1994, 151.

^{xxxix} Harold Lasswell (1902-78), a past president of the American Political Science Association, who was among the most influential political scientists of the twentieth century.

^{xl} *E*, 307; 213-14.

LS: Stop here. Every man who is not wise is only a fraction of a man, because a large part of him are things, places, human beings, who are not him. This reminds of the description of the citizen as a fractional unit. In other words, this men being fractional is a broader phenomenon than that of the citizen as citizen only. This I wanted to say.

Somewhat later—I do not have the reference here—it must be on page 47 or 48, the paragraph beginning, “Society has made man more feeble, not only in taking from him.” Yes?

Mr. Reinken: “not merely by robbing him of the right to his own strength, but still more by making his strength insufficient for his needs.”^{xli}

LS: Yes. And let us then go on, the third paragraph from this.

Mr. Reinken: “When our natural tendencies have not been interfered with by human prejudice and human institutions, the happiness alike of children and of men consists in the enjoyment of their liberty. But the child’s liberty is restricted by his lack of strength.”

LS: “by his weakness.”

Mr. Reinken: “by his weakness. He who does as he likes is happy provided he is self-sufficing—”

LS: i.e. provided his desires do not extend beyond his forces. Yes.

Mr. Reinken: “it is so with the man who is living in a state of nature.”

END OF TAPE SIDE ONE.

Mr. Reinken: “He who does¹⁴ as he likes is not happy if his desires exceed his strength; it is so with a child in like conditions. Even in a state of nature children only enjoy an imperfect liberty, like that enjoyed by men in social life. Each of us, unable to dispense with the help of others, becomes so far weak and wretched. We were meant to be men, laws and customs thrust us back into infancy.”^{xlii}

LS: Let us stop here. So you see, on the one hand, Rousseau of course admits that children are imperfect men; to that extent he admits that. But as I say, he tries to qualify it as much as possible. And the second point, in this quotation as well as in the preceding one, which we have seen before: the state of society is a state incompatible with happiness. A citizen as citizen cannot be happy except in a spurious way; that Rousseau repeats again. Now let us read the next paragraph.

Student: “These are weighty considerations, and they provide a solution for all the conflicting problems—”

^{xli} E, 309;215.

^{xlii} E, 310; 216.

LS: “for all contradictions of the social system.”^{xliii} So, in other words, the contradictions are essential to the social system; and therefore if Rousseau’s teaching is self-contradictory, he is entitled to say he only reproduces the contradiction inherent in the social system. This is not a self-contradiction, a true self-contradiction. But there is a solution, and what is that? What is that solution? That is page 49, paragraph 3.

Mr. Reinken: “There are two kinds of dependence: dependence on things, which is the work of nature; and dependence on men, which is the work of society. Dependence on things, being non-moral, does no injury to liberty and begets no vices; dependence on men, being out of order, gives rise to every kind of vice, and through this master and slave become mutually depraved. If there is any cure for this social evil, it is to be found in the substitution of law for the individual; in arming the general will with a real strength beyond the power of any individual will. If the laws of nations, like the laws of nature—”

LS: “The laws of nations” means, of course, the positive human laws, not international law. Yes.

Mr. Reinken: “like the laws of nature, could never be broken by any human power, dependence on men would become dependence on things; all the advantages of a state of nature would be combined with all the advantages of social life in the commonwealth. The liberty which preserves a man from vice would be united with the morality which raises him to virtue.”^{xliv}

LS: Yes. So you see, that is a very interesting point, because at the beginning Rousseau simply said no solution of the contradiction is possible. Either man or citizen, you remember that? Now, here, he begins at least to play with the notion of a possible solution, and he indicates it. Now, the formulae which he uses here are fundamentally the formulae of the *Social Contract*, which we will take up later. So therefore, we can say, the well-constructed civil society brings about the closest approximation of the citizen to the man; say, in a democracy, man lives, in a way, as naturally as if he did not live in society, subject to laws. Now, this, of course, in this strict sense cannot be achieved, as will be made clear.

Here he surely states again the principle of what he regards as a sound education: no subjection of men to men. Dependence on things is inevitable—I mean, we need food; we need shelter—but dependence of men on men must be avoided—i.e. since it cannot be avoided completely, it must mean mutual dependence. If I depend on *X* as much as *X* depends on me, I am not simply dependent on him. So, under a condition of equality, of social and political equality, the dependence of men on men could be as small as it can be. Now, it follows also—we cannot possibly read everything—¹⁵that a child must be taught to bear sufferings, bodily pains, because otherwise he would be as a grown-up being [inaudible] all the time; and there Rousseau is rather tough. You know, no spoiling of children regarding heat and cold and hunger and thirst, and so on. We do not have to read that.

Now, let us turn to page 53, paragraphs 2 to 3, I believe it is. Let me first see. No, that cannot be. Can you give me the translation for one moment. You see, that is very awkward; I cannot find it.

^{xliii} *E*, 311; 216.

^{xliv} *E*, 311; 216-17.

I only read to you what must be in this neighborhood, this sentence: “With the age of reason begins the civil servitude.” Do you have that?

Student: It is at the top of page 53, the first full sentence. She translates it “the slave of the community.”^{xliv}

LS: In other words, civil life is necessarily a form of servitude. Beginning of the first chapter of the *Social Contract*: “Man is born free, and everywhere we find him in chains. How does this change take place? I do not know. What can make it legitimate? I believe I can answer that question.”^{xlvi} So, in other words, the problem of political philosophy is to understand the difference between *legitimate* chains and *illegitimate* chains. Chains there will be in every case. In the next paragraph, what you read there, “I come back to practice.”

Mr. Reinken: “I return to practical matters. I have already said your child must not get what he asks, but what he needs; he must never act from obedience, but from necessity. The very words *obey* and *command* will be excluded from his vocabulary, still more those of duty and obligation ; but the words strength, necessity, weakness, and constraint must have a large place in it.”

LS: That plays a role in childhood. Yes.

Mr. Reinken: “Before the age of reason it is impossible to form any idea of moral beings or social relations; so avoid, as far as may be, the use of words which express these ideas, lest the child at an early age should attach wrong ideas to them—”^{xlvi}

LS: Let us stop here. He develops this: there is no duty, no sense of duty in childhood. You remember when he spoke of an innate sense of justice, and this excited some of you. That doesn’t mean an innate sense of duty. It means an innate sense of whether the child can be offended; it means an innate sense of my right, and not of any duty. That is the minimum we have to say. But let us come to a clearer statement on page 55 in the second half of the second paragraph.

Mr. Reinken: “Laws, you say, though binding on conscience, exercise the same constraint over grown-up men. That is so, but what are these men but children spoiled by education? This is just what you should avoid. Use force with children and reasoning with men; this is the natural order; the wise man needs no laws.”^{xlvi}

LS: So you see, laws are something very questionable; [so] reason. But reason can only be used with men, and not even with all men. But force. That is very interesting. There is no place for obligation, laws. There is only a place, strictly speaking, for reason on the one hand and force on the other. Let us read the next paragraph.

^{xliv} E, 316; 221.

^{xlvi} Rousseau, 1994, 1.1, 131.

^{xlvi} E, 316; 221.

^{xlvi} E, 319-20; 223.

Mr. Reinken: “Treat your scholar according to his age. Put him in his place from the first, and keep him in it, so that he no longer tries to leave it. Then before he knows what goodness^{xlix} is, he will be practicing its chief lesson. Give him no orders at all, absolutely none. Do not even let him think that you claim any authority over him.”

LS: There is no obligation or authority. There is only force. Go on.

Mr. Reinken: “Let him only know that he is weak and you are strong, that his condition and yours puts him at your mercy; let this be perceived, learned, and felt. Let him early find upon his proud neck, the heavy yoke which nature has imposed upon us, the heavy yoke of necessity, under which every finite being must bow. Let him find this necessity in things, not in the caprices of man; let the curb be force, not authority. If there is something he should not do, do not forbid him, but prevent him without explanation or reasoning; what you give him, give it at his first word without prayers or entreaties, above all without conditions. Give willingly, refuse unwillingly, but let your refusal be irrevocable; let no entreaties move you; let your ‘No,’ once uttered, be a wall of brass, against which the child may exhaust his strength some five or six times, but in the end he will try no more to overthrow it.”¹

LS: Let us consider that: will the child . . . I mean, there is no authority; there is no command, no prohibition. But there will only be noes. From time to time there will surely be noes, noes which cannot be explained to the child because he lacks reason. Now, is this really conducive to the non-emergence of rebellion, anger, and all these things? I fail to understand that. Yes?

Student: If you grant to Rousseau that it is possible for the child to avoid imputing will to things, and then you, the tutor, you turn yourself into a thing, a wall of brass.

LS: Yes, but then we come back to our old question: can the child make this distinction as simply as grown-up people do? You know, what we discussed last time. I must say, there seems to be something very wrong *unless* we assume that the intention of the *Emile* is not merely to give instruction regarding the education of children,¹⁶ [unless] the book is at the same time also an intellectual experiment along the lines which I stated before, namely to construe the development of a human being without any prejudices, without any prejudices whatever, and see where prejudices would necessarily come in. With this thought in mind, no civil society [is] possible without prejudices, but there are desirable prejudices and undesirable prejudices; and then the best thing would of course be to have the best prejudices.

But let us see: in order to realize both the necessity of prejudices, and also which prejudices are the most rational ones, we must make an experiment with a child until we see [when the need for prejudice emerges]. For example, that a child in the cradle wouldn’t need prejudice is obvious, but when does the need for prejudice emerge, under what conditions? And what light does it throw on the prejudices in general, and on the best prejudice in particular? I believe [one has to look at it that way]; otherwise, I cannot see how one can understand that. Now, let us first—we have to consider a few more very important passages. Page 58, paragraph 2. Yes?

^{xlix} Foxley’s translation of *sagesse*.

¹ *E*, 320; 223-24.

Student: Would it be of any help if we were to read the next sentence after the paragraph Mr. Reinken just finished reading, where he says, “It is in the nature of man patiently to endure the necessity of things”?

LS: Where is that? I see: “and this word, there is nothing left,” he says, “is an answer against which no child has ever rebelled.”^{li} I deny the truth of this assertion.

Student: But then he qualifies it importantly.

LS: No, even if he knows it is true. Even if it is not there, then *get* it, by hook or by crook. Have you never seen a brat?

Student: This isn’t the importance of the qualification. It is like the example of the [inaudible] later in this very book: once the child realizes he is up against the wall of brass, everything went all right; but as long as he figured—

LS: Yes, but to what extent can he know it universally—I mean, in a given case, I admit [he can know it]—that is the question. In other words is imagination, or however you call that, which makes people have foolish thoughts, does this not develop necessarily? Can its development be prevented by any means? That is the same question, from a different point of view, which Mr. Reinken raised: is¹⁷ this education of Rousseau, based on so many artifices, lies, deceptions, is this a natural education? How can you expect a natural human being to come out of this unnatural education? It is only another way of [asking] it. Does he not begin really at the wrong angle, although there are many things he says which are very sensible? I mean, the particular things; for example, one should not . . . training children to bear the hardships of weather as soon as possible, this makes sense; and many more things.¹⁸ I mean, if the book would consist only of simply absurd proposals, no one would have even read it, I suppose, and we wouldn’t have. It contains also a lot of sensible things. But the question is, is there not a vitiating principle to the whole thing? And I would say it is because he assumed that man is not by nature a social being. Therefore the education of the child absolutely by himself . . . and the moment you would have a bunch of kids, the difficulties would arise inevitably. Even if there were five Emiles educated each by his own Jean-Jacques Rousseau, if they would come together, the childish competitions, or whatever you call it, would arise immediately.

Student: But this is the thing: he has denied himself that this could ever be put into practice.

LS: Yes, we come to that exactly; that we discuss now. On page 58, third paragraph.

Student: But besides the fact of whether you could ever put it into practice, the great question is, what is the major effect of saying this, if it can be said?

LS: But listen: I think it is terribly important for a scheme of education whether it can be put into practice or not. Don’t you think so? This is the question. Now, this question is answered in the passage which we are now going to read.

^{li} E, 320; 224.

Mr. Reinken: “There is another point to be considered which confirms the suitability of this method—”

LS: Let me see: “But where shall we place this child in order to educate it like an insensible being?”^{lii}

Mr. Reinken: At the bottom: “But where shall we find a place for our child so as to bring him up as a senseless being, an automaton? Shall we keep him in the moon, or on a desert island? Shall we remove him from human society?”

LS: “From all humans.” Yes.

Mr. Reinken: “Will he not always have around him the sight and the pattern of the passions of other people? Will he never see children of his own age? Will he not see his parents, his neighbors, his nurse, his governess, his man-servant, his tutor himself, who after all will not be an angel?”

LS: So, you see. Now, what does this answer?

Mr. Reinken: “Here we have a real and serious objection. But did I tell you that an education according to nature would be an easy task? Oh, men! is it my fault that you have made all good things difficult? I admit that I am aware of these difficulties; perhaps they are insuperable; but nevertheless it is certain that we do to some extent avoid them by trying to do so. I am showing what we should try to attain, I do not say we can attain it, but I do say that whoever comes nearest to it is nearest to success.”^{liii}

LS: Yes, in other words, it is a goal which can never be achieved. But it is something the approximation to which decides about its goodness, that is the point. That is very interesting. What notion of an end is here implied? It is not the classical notion of the end, where the end is understood to be something which can be achieved—not necessarily by all under all circumstances, but which is possible. Plato’s *Republic*: the insistence all the time, however ironical that may be, [that] this is not only desirable, but also possible. And he must prove its possibility. Plato does this in the *Republic*—as it were¹⁹ [with respect to] an impossible object, this particular polity. But the way of thinking, the method, is meant seriously. Just as in Aristotle:²⁰ you must show the possibility; and if it is not in itself possible, then it is foolish to approximate it. But where do we find impossibilities as giving *the* light to man? Where do we find that? Somewhere else. Not in the classics.

Student: In the medievalist tradition?

LS: No, no. Here the possibility is always assumed.

Student: Spinoza presents the human constructs as

^{lii} E, 324; 227.

^{liii} E, 325; 227-28.

LS: Well, we don't have to go into any speculation. Take such a thing as frictionless motion. The typically modern concepts—of modern science—of ideal cases, where ideal case means something which is impossible in the nature of things, but which are very simple constructs which permit you to analyze what is actual. This notion of ideal which is not ancient or medieval, which came up in the modern age, this is guiding Rousseau. In other words, what you find in former times as the only preparation of that are mathematical things: a circle, a true circle. [LS writes on the blackboard] Well, you see: no circle drawn on the blackboard is a true circle. Here, empirical proof of that; and even if Mr. Reinken would do it, it would not be a perfect circle. So, that is impossible. Mathematical things cannot be sensible things; cannot be. What we mean by mathematical things are always noetic things. We can represent them in sensible things, but it is only a defective representation. Now, what happened in modern times was this, that mathematical physics means—if I understand anything of that—this: it is possible to have mathematical things—not numbers or geometrical figures—as the key to the visible or sensible things. In other words, such a thing as the perfectly black body in optics, or the frictionless motion, these are physical concepts—not mathematical concepts properly speaking—physical concepts of a mathematical structure. Does this make sense to you?

Student: Very much so.

LS: Because Mr. Reinken is as far as I know the only one properly trained in the exact sciences here; therefore he is Apollo for me. So, Rousseau's perfect education has this character. Now, it was fully made clear, as far as I can see, by Kant: for Kant an ideal—say, of a perfect society—requires only one proof of possibility, namely that it is not self-contradictory. That you should show the conditions of its possibility, by looking at human nature, for example, that is out. Because otherwise you don't know of how much perfection human nature is capable. If you want to have infinite progress, you cannot take your goals from human nature as empirically known, because human nature as empirically known can be modified indefinitely. And therefore the only criterion, according to Kant, is that it is free from self-contradiction. Now, these constructs [blackboard] also are free from self-contradiction, of course; otherwise you could not use them as models. This I think we must keep in mind. In other words, the education described by Rousseau is an ideal case in the modern sense of the word, not in the older sense.

Now, the first condition that he develops in the sequel: the educator must be perfectly virtuous, and especially kind, and as he puts it in the paragraph following, toward the end of the next paragraph: "love the others and they will love you."^{liv} What a sanguine assumption! So the child will see nothing but kindness if the tutor is kind. You must admit that that demands much credulity on our part. The child will of course, under these conditions, if all this is correct,²¹ never see vice in any form. That is wonderful, but Rousseau has not shown that it is possible. If the whole environment which the child will ever see will be virtuous human beings, well, it is true, the child will never see vice, as long as he doesn't leave his home. But Rousseau didn't assume that the valets and other people all would be virtuous human beings. Yes?

Student: To some extent, he says to explain to the child that these people are sick.^{lv}

^{liv} E, 326; 228.

^{lv} E, 327-28; 229-30.

LS: Yes, that comes in the sequel; that is correct. And he shows the example of an old grumpy gardener, somewhere else, who gets angry.^{lvi} And then he is told “well, not that he is a bad man” or something: that doesn’t exist. Because if you tell the child that there is wickedness, you plant the seeds of wickedness into his heart. That must be avoided. So, you say, “that poor man is sick.” Sure. That is developed; it is indeed true. So, in other words, what Rousseau must have—and that goes through the whole work—[is] a make-believe world, a make-believe world. The natural education is a make-believe education.²² This does not necessarily condemn it, but it surely is not so natural as it would seem to be. Good. We turn now to page 61, paragraph 5; because we have to think of the end of this class.

Mr. Reinken: “Our first duties are to ourselves; our first feelings are centered on self; all our instincts are at first directed to our own preservation and our own welfare. Thus the first notion of justice springs not from what we owe to others, but from what is due to us. Here is another error in popular methods of education. If you talk to children of their duties, and not of their rights, you are beginning at the wrong end, and telling them what they cannot understand, what cannot be of any interest to them.”^{lvii}

LS: So, you see now how you have to understand the remark of the innate sense of justice that he made before: it can only be a sense of my right. Whether that can so easily be divorced from the sense of duty—that the others owe it to you not to interfere with your right—would need some argument which is not given here.

Student: It seems to me that if you connect the passage which we just read before, about if you’re nice, everyone else will be nice to you, with the passage that was just read, the former passage might be taken to mean that the *only* way you will get people to be good to you is to be good to them, or to suggest a calculation such as you find in Pufendorf or Hobbes: if you are not grateful, you won’t get gratitude in return, or

LS: Well, you see, we cannot read everything: there was a passage around page 49, paragraph 4 or thereabouts—we cannot read everything—where one would assume that the reaction of the child would be gratitude, but where Rousseau only sees the humiliation. That I find very interesting. Well, since this seems to be of some importance, let us read it then. You have the passage? “Leave the child in the dependence on things alone.”

Mr. Reinken: Yes, page 49, paragraph 3. “Keep the child dependent on things only. By this course of education you will have followed the order of nature. Let his unreasonable wishes meet with physical obstacles only, or the punishment which results from his own actions, lessons which will be recalled when the same circumstances occur again.”

LS: In other words, they are not punishments proper, but only evil consequences. Yes?

Mr. Reinken: “It is enough to prevent him from wrongdoing without forbidding him to do wrong.”

^{lvi} E, 331; 232-33.

^{lvii} E, 329; 231.

LS: Wrong-doing has here no moral sense. Doing the wrong thing.

Student: Like a blunder.

LS: Yes. Go on.

Mr. Reinken: “Experience or lack of power should take the place of law. Give him, not what he wants, but what he needs. Let there be no question of obedience for him or tyranny for you. Supply the strength he lacks just so far as is required for freedom, not for power, so that he may receive your services with a sort of shame.”^{lviii}

LS: “With a sort of humiliation,” he says. Stronger: humiliation. In other words, the possibility of gratitude for kindness must not be tolerated, because that is a feeling of inferiority; and then he will wish to become superior, and is already a tyrant when he is two years old. I found this *very* characteristic.

Student: I am trying to follow this: is there almost, in this world . . . What Rousseau has succeeded in doing would be to eliminate ethical discourse altogether.

LS: Yes, up to a certain point. I mean, that is exactly what we have to watch: where does the sense of obligation or duty arise? Up to now, we haven’t seen anything of it yet.

Student: This is strikingly close to the positivist program as put in certain kinds . . .

LS: Yes, I have no doubt that Rousseau has had a terrific effect. I mean, he was watered down, made in many respects more commonsensical and pedestrian, but in other respects also made more vulgar. And in this form he has conquered the Western world. I know that; that is the reason why we read him.

May I mention one point? We don’t have time to read it here: there is a book, or rather a series of lectures by C.S. Lewis, the English author, *The Abolition of Man*, which is worth reading from every point of view. It is his criticism of social science positivism or [right]. And he calls these men here, in the first lecture, “men without chests.” Meaning they admit bodily desires, and they admit reasoning, in a way: namely, how to get the objects of bodily desires. The other things, the values, as they are called, are merely subjective. In other words, there is a lower part of the body—stomach and below—and there is a brain; but there is nothing in between, there is no heart. This is not a bad description of this view of man. I recommend it to your reading. C.S. Lewis, *The Abolition of Man*, New York, 1959.^{lix} Good. So, I hope it is clear by now that if Rousseau speaks so emphatically of an innate sense of justice, that doesn’t mean very much; there can be no doubt about that. And we must see how justice gradually arises.

^{lviii} *E*, 311; 217. It is hard to see how Strauss reads this passage to deny that children should feel humiliated; on the contrary, Rousseau recommends (here and elsewhere) that children be made to feel a kind of humiliation for their weakness, so that they long for the honor of doing without assistance.

^{lix} See C.S. Lewis, *The Abolition of Man* (New York: Harper Collins, 1974), p. 25.

Now, it is clear, and it is stated on page 62, note 1, that Rousseau has of course no objection to spanking. In this respect he is very reactionary compared with present-day educational theories. Because that is simply an exercise of force. Force is allowed; only no authority. That is the difference. Let us turn to the note on page 64.

Mr. Reinken: “Moreover if the duty of keeping his word were not established in the child's mind by its own utility, the child's growing consciousness would soon impress it on him as a law of conscience, as an innate principle, only requiring suitable experiences for its development. This first outline is not sketched by man, it is engraved on the heart by the author of all justice. Take away the primitive law of contract and the obligation imposed by contract and there is nothing left of human society but vanity and empty show. He who only keeps his word because it is to his own profit is hardly more pledged than if he had given no promise at all. This principle is of the utmost importance, and deserves to be thoroughly studied, for man is now beginning to be at war with himself.”^{lx}

LS: Because he becomes moral, that is the point. The inner contradiction of man is the contradiction between natural, i.e. amoral, man and civil or moral man. In other words, that is absolutely ambiguous what he says here. He uses traditional language: there is a law engraved in the hearts of men. And what is that law, the first law of morality? State it again.

Student: Do your own good [with the least possible harm] to others.

LS: No, here. That is not the law of the conscience. Keep your word²³; perform your covenant, the contract—that is it. He has promised it and must keep the promise. This duty to keep one's obligation, that is the thing of which he speaks. The primitive law of conventions or contracts, and the obligation which it imposes, this is the primitive law on which society rests. Now, which great moralist said the law, the moral law, can be summarized as the law of keeping your covenants?

Student: Hobbes.

LS: Hobbes, of course. *Leviathan*, chapter 14—I have written it down here somewhere—and to the beginning of chapter 15.^{lxi} Hobbes's doctrine is a bit more complicated: this law is only the third law in Hobbes. But it is *the* operative law. Why? Because all obligations cannot possibly be derived from your commitment to someone else. You are not obliged to be good or kind to anybody else. This obligation must arise from your contract with him, or with other people. All obligations arise from contracts, and therefore there cannot be any obligation if there is not a primary obligation to keep the contracts. And this primary obligation is derived from a fundamental right, the right of self-preservation. The argument is very simply this: you cannot preserve yourself if you are not a member of a society, with a police force, or something of this kind, which protects life, and therefore contract. But since all obligations arise from contract, there are no innate duties, of course. Otherwise you wouldn't need contract for them. They arise only from contract. And if you say “but this duty is surely primitive,” as²⁴ [Rousseau] puts it here, engraved in the hearts of man, not derivative from contract (surely the obligation to

^{lx} E, 334; 234-35.

^{lxi} Hobbes, 1994, Chapters 14, para. 13-Chapter 15, para. 2, pp. 82-89.

perform contracts cannot be derivative from the obligation to perform contracts), that is clear. Yes, but it is derivative from the fundamental right of self-preservation. That is the innate sense of justice.

In other words, Rousseau may use a more pious language, if I may say so, than Hobbes does, but he doesn't mean anything different. Let us keep this in mind. But once a child has understood that, however, that self-preservation is not possible without keeping one's word, then²⁵, by this fact he enters the moral world, as he says at the beginning of the next paragraph: "Here we are in the moral world; here the door is open to vice."^{lxii} That is also vice's beginning. Because if there is not yet a moral world, there cannot be vice, of course. I mean, a dog cannot be strictly speaking vicious. Mr. Butterworth.

Mr. Butterworth: Just one question here: how do you consider this central sentence that whosoever doesn't keep his promise except for his profit is hardly bound by. . . .

LS: Is this in the next paragraph?

Student: No, it is in the same note.

LS: But let us read the next paragraph where this thought is developed. Read the next paragraph.

Mr. Reinken: "We are now in the world of morals, the door to vice is open."

LS: That is part of the beginning. Tell him where it is: page 65, at the top.

Mr. Reinken: "Deceit and falsehood are born along with conventions and duties."

LS: You see, the order is interesting: "with conventions and duties." The duties arise only from conventions. Yes.

Mr. Reinken: "As soon as we can do what we ought not to do, we try to hide what we ought not to have done."

LS: So, that is the connection between duty and vice. Yes?

Mr. Reinken: "As soon as self-interest makes us give a promise, a greater interest may make us break it."

LS: Obviously. I mean, the difficulty of every²⁶ [utilitarian]. I mean, interest cannot be a sufficient basis because there are always other interests around, sooner or later. Yes.

Mr. Reinken: "it is merely a question of doing it with impunity; we naturally take refuge in concealment and falsehood. As we have not been able to prevent vice, we must punish it. The sorrows of life begin with its mistakes."^{lxiii}

^{lxii} E, 334; 235.

^{lxiii} E, 334-35; 235.

LS: I am sorry. This is very important, but that is not exactly the passage. Where does he refer to present interest? Mr. Butterworth, you had this passage.

Mr. Butterworth: It was in the note that you referred to.

LS: No, it is somewhere else. On page 66, bottom, I see now. There it is. When he speaks. . . . What does he say? “Does this belong to you?”

Mr. Reinken: “‘Did you do it?’ For in so doing what should I do but teach him to deny it? If his difficult temperament compels me to make some agreement with him, I will take good care that the suggestion always comes from him, never from me—

LS: In other words, that he is the promiser; and the duty is not imposed upon him. Because right is the first thing, and not duty. So he must be willing to alienate part of his right. This is the meaning of any contract, of course. Yes.

Mr. Reinken: “that when he undertakes anything he has always a present and effective interest—”

LS: “A sensible interest,” meaning an interest which he feels. Yes.

Mr. Reinken: “a sensible interest in fulfilling his promise—”

LS: That is all we need. In other words, if there is such a present and sensible interest lacking, the incentive to perform the contract lags. Now, look at the social contract: in a civil society, this sensible and present interest which makes clear to you that your interest is to do your duty—or to obey the laws or not to obey them—is of course never complete because there are possibilities of evading the laws. You must have heard that there are people who specialize in finding loopholes in tax laws; and perhaps there are some loopholes which are not real loopholes but which may be discovered only 30 years afterward, which is for some people exactly the same as if they would never be discovered, you know.

So in other words, what Rousseau says is this: if it is manifestly foolish to do forbidden things, manifestly foolish, practically no one will do it. Rousseau gives this example somewhere in the *Emile*, I believe; it must come later—he says this, a beautiful example: someone says he is absolutely in love with a woman with whom he is not supposed to be in love, but he cannot resist this impulse. And Rousseau made this simple experiment: they erect gallows beneath a window of this lady, and he is absolutely sure, as soon as he will have been upstairs, when he comes out he will be hanged. You will see the love is not irresistible.^{lxiv} So in other words, if the punishment is manifestly before him [he won’t do wrong.] But the trouble is that this is not true in all cases, you know. Therefore you must have a general feeling of decency or law-abidingness, or whatever you call it, but that is of course no longer identical with sheer self-interest, the interest of the desires. And the child cannot have it yet, and therefore the promise of the child

^{lxiv} *E*, 650-51; 494.

must be so that the advantage he gets through the contract, through the promise, he can never enjoy for one second without keeping his promise. [Inaudible words]

This is the problem: how is it possible for men to prefer the common good to the private good? That is the question. This is what Rousseau's *Social Contract* is meant to bring about. And the moral man in Rousseau's sense is the man who habitually, universally prefers the common good to his private good. But this is against man's nature. By nature he prefers his own good to any other good; and there is no innate sense of preferring the common good to the private good. No innate sense. In that sense, the sense of justice is not innate. What is innate is the desire for self-preservation as something which I must do, and from which these social obligations derive. But the right of self-preservation has an evidence for our instincts which the common good and the pursuit of it does not have. That is the problem as Rousseau sees it. Yes?

Student: I found one thing you didn't mention. On page 52, the second paragraph; the paragraph beginning "Let us come back to the primitive law." The next sentence puzzles me: he says, "Nature has made children helpless and in need of affection."^{lxv} Now, that is not a blatant contradiction, but it does seem to be a bit inconsistent with this . . .

LS: All right: how would you translate it into another language so that Rousseau can . . . I mean, what is the fact which Rousseau has in mind, which even a social scientist of today would admit?

Student: Does he just mean that he wants someone to agree that²⁷ [a child] wants people around him to like him?

LS: No, but look: in the first place I think it is true that mothers of children, just as mothers of puppies, have a natural urge to take care of these helpless creatures, to give suck to them and so on. And there is some sort of reasonableness in this. Because, since for one reason or another the young ones of various species including the human species would perish inevitably if the mother would not take care of them, it looks like a teleology, doesn't it? That nature has so arranged things that the helplessness of the baby corresponds to the concern of the mother, even of the father sometimes.

Student: Yes, but Rousseau wants to deny the forming of natural sociality, that the party itself doesn't . . .

LS: Yes, but you see, Rousseau goes so far . . . we have seen. Man is the least gregarious of animals for Rousseau. We have seen [that]. But still, how could he do it? Hobbes also admits these facts, by the way, but how does he get away with it?²⁸ There is in the first place natural lust, as he calls it, which leads to the procreation of children. And then there is something like it, a submoral urge of the mother—in a way also of the parents—to take care of the children. This does not in any way lead to anything to be called "society." That is developed by Rousseau at great length in a note to the *Second Discourse* which we haven't read—I believe it is not even in the English translation—where he takes issue with Locke.^{lxvi} Locke gives the construction on Hobbesian lines of the conjugal society, as he calls it, when he says there is nothing in particular

^{lxv} *E*, 315; 220.

^{lxvi} Rousseau, *SD*, 214-18; 86-90.

[keeping that society together apart from the need for their offspring for care]. You have this also in certain animal species, that they remain together to take care of their offspring. In the case of man this society lasts longer and is firmer than in the case of the other species. He never tells you how long and how firm it is. But the notion is, as soon as the children are grown up there is no longer any need for any relation between the children and the parents, and for the parents among themselves. Do you see? In other words, the conjugal society, if we use the Lockean phrase, is in no way the seminary of civil society; in no way. Because the civil society is an association of grown-up males.

Student: Locke would say that your parental obligation remains, wouldn't he?

LS: In what sense can you call these obligations? You see, you must read the chapter in Locke—I believe it is Chapter 6; I am not sure—where he speaks about that, and read it with some care; because the first impression is of course this is just . . . he quotes all the time “Honor thy father and mother”^{lxvii} a reproduction of the Biblical thesis, but when you look more closely, you see that is not true and that the grown-up child has any obligation of obedience to his father is due only to the expectation of inheritance.^{lxviii} He says that. Locke says, “truly this is not a natural obligation.” But he says it is a very powerful obligation—I am sure it is.

Student: The Bible is a little hard-boiled on the point, too: “Honor thy father and mother, that *thy* days may be long in the land.”^{lxviii}

LS: Yes, but that is still another story; that is not quite the same. “Thy days” means probably something different, namely, the days of the whole nation, that the well-being of the whole society depends on that. That is something slightly different, I believe. Good. Yes?

Student: On page 69, at the top, he gives the instruction: never hurt anybody. That doesn't seem to be grounded on this contract.

LS: Yes, that we wanted to read anyway. Will you read this? Can you begin at the beginning of this paragraph?

Mr. Reinken: “Examine your rules of education; you will find them all topsy-turvy, especially in all that concerns virtue and morals. The only moral lesson which is suited for a child—the most important lesson for every time of life—is this: ‘Never hurt anybody.’ The very rule of well-doing, if not subordinated to this rule, is dangerous, false, and contradictory. Who is there who does no good? Every one does some good, the wicked as well as the righteous; he makes one happy at the cost of the misery of a hundred, and hence spring all our misfortunes.”

LS: Who is the one whom he makes happy?

Student: Himself.

LS: Yes; funny argument, isn't it? Go on.

^{lxvii} *Second Treatise*, Ch. 6.

^{lxviii} Exodus 20:12.

Mr. Reinken: “The noblest virtues are negative, they are also the most difficult, for they make little show, and do not even make room for that pleasure so dear to the heart of man, the thought that some one is pleased with us.”^{lxix}

LS: Let us read the note to this.

Mr. Reinken: “The precept ‘Never hurt anybody,’ implies the greatest possible independence of human society; for in the social state one man's good is another man's evil. This relation is part of the nature of things; it is inevitable. You may apply this test to man in society and to the hermit to discover which is best. A distinguished author says, ‘None but the wicked can live alone.’”

LS: That is Diderot, who said it in application to Rousseau.^{lxx} Diderot said this because Rousseau was so unsocial, and he meant that shows the fundamental viciousness of Rousseau. Yes: “I say.”

Mr. Reinken: “I say, ‘None but the good can live alone.’ This proposition, if less sententious, is truer and more logical than the other. If the wicked were alone, what evil would he do? It is among his fellows that he lays his snares for others. If they wish to apply this argument to the man of property, my answer is to be found in the passage to which this note is appended.”^{lxxi}

LS: Now, let us see. How would you state that? What is the difficulty?

Student: It seems that this is not really grounded on contract.

LS: Yes, that is true. But what does it mean? How far does it give you guidance? Not to harm anybody; and then Rousseau says “when you live in society you necessarily harm someone.” Does he not say so? That is what we have seen, his change of the fundamental law regarding the neighbor: pursue your good with the least evil to someone else. You will harm other people, that goes without saying. But don’t harm anyone unnecessarily. That is what it amounts to. Now, Rousseau says—you remember from the *Second Discourse*—this is due to a natural interest, which he calls “commiseration” or “compassion.” And this is later on reinforced by reasoning, by the very simple reason that if you hurt people unnecessarily, especially—i.e. if you hurt them all the time—you will have a very difficult life. So, it is most imprudent to harm people unnecessarily. I do not see What is the difficulty? Ultimately we come back to this famous distinction we had before: namely, the good man is the solitary man. Therefore he lives as an individual. [Blackboard] Let us call it “I.” And here we have the citizen. This formula is absolutely crucial. And now, the citizen, of course, is the man who makes the contract. The good man has no duties. You know, that is the key distinction for Rousseau: goodness is not virtue. Virtue is based in one way or the other on the social contract. The whole world of obligations, duties, virtues and morality is unnatural, and yet necessary; that is the point. That is to say, the whole world of the conscience, as distinguished from simple natural goodness where conscience doesn’t come in, belongs to the world of contract. We must keep this in mind in order to

^{lxix} E, 340; 239.

^{lxx} In Act 4, Scene 3 of *Le Fils Naturel*. We do not know for certain that Rousseau was right to think Diderot was referring to him.

^{lxxi} E, 340-41; 240.

understand the Profession of Faith of the Savoyard Vicar. There are three more passages which we should read, and then we must stop. On page 73, in the third paragraph.

Mr. Reinken: “If the study of languages were merely the study of words, that is, of the symbols by which language expresses itself, then this might be a suitable study for children; but languages, as they change the symbols, also modify the ideas which the symbols express.”

LS: He doesn’t say “symbols,” but “signs,” which is perhaps better, because it is not loaded with these complicated theories of symbols with which we are today bothered. Yes.

Mr. Reinken: “Minds are formed by language, thoughts take their color from its ideas. Reason alone is common to all. Every language has its own form.”^{lxxii}

LS: Yes. I read this only for those of you who listened to my lecture last Monday. That is the older view. The distinction between [inaudible]. On page 74, paragraph 4, the beginning is not entirely unamusing. “Readers, always remember that he who speaks to you is neither a scholar nor a philosopher, but a simple man, lover of truth, without party, without system;” and so on.^{lxxiii} Well, he is not as simple as he says.

And the last point—and that is important to keep in mind throughout—on page 76, paragraph 2, toward the end of that paragraph. This we must keep in mind throughout, when he says, “The first word”

Mr. Reinken: “The first meaningless phrase”

[The tape is turned off while Mr. Reinken reads and resumes in progress]^{lxxiv}

LS: —reinforce the stronger. And so, there are many more passages. The key principle, I think, of Rousseau’s education is: bring up the child without any prejudices, without any trust in other people

END OF TAPE. The following taken from class notes:

. . . without any trust in other people’s views. This belongs together with *no pride*. Pride and prejudice go together. Rousseau admits that one can’t bring up a child without prejudices, but the greatest possible approximation is what he teaches. The *telos* is replaced by a man-made goal.

END OF LECTURE.

¹ Deleted “your.”

² Changed from “we are not merely to limit.”

^{lxxii} *E*, 346; 244.

^{lxxiii} *E*, 348; 246.

^{lxxiv} The Foxley translation continues “the first thing taken on the word of another person without seeing its use for oneself, this is the beginning of the ruin of the child’s judgment. He may dazzle the eyes of fools long enough before he recovers from such a loss” (*E*, 350; 247-48).

³ Deleted “he.”

⁴ Deleted “these.”

⁵ Deleted “the.”

⁶ Deleted “him.”

⁷ Deleted “there”; moved “is.”

⁸ Deleted “what.”

⁹ Deleted “have.”

¹⁰ Deleted “and.”

¹¹ Deleted “of.”

¹² Deleted “of that sycophant.”

¹³ Deleted “does.”

¹⁴ Deleted “what.”

¹⁵ Deleted “it follows also.”

¹⁶ Deleted “but if.”

¹⁷ Deleted “not.”

¹⁸ Deleted “But the point”

¹⁹ Deleted “at.”

²⁰ Deleted “possible.”

²¹ Deleted “the child will.”

²² Deleted: “That is, I think, something....”

²³ Deleted “given.”

²⁴ Deleted “he.”

²⁵ Deleted “he becomes.”

²⁶ Deleted “utilitarianist.”

²⁷ Deleted “he.”

²⁸ Deleted “These are just. . . .”

²⁹ Deleted “it sounds simply.”

Session 7

[In progress] **LS:** —is reasoning only on the basis of the senses. What does this mean? What would be the alternative to that? I think one can never understand the thesis of anyone if one does not consider the alternative it is meant to exclude.

Student: I think it is meant to exclude . . . it gives the impression to me that the child's reasoning is the stage on the road to complete understanding and reasoning.

LS: No; what is the alternative to reasoning on the basis of the senses? What would that be?

Student: I think the alternative is reasoning independently of the senses.

LS: But what is this, positively expressed? Let us forget about mathematics, because what Rousseau says about mathematics in this part is also still based on sense activity. You draw circles, and you count sheep, or whatever it may be; that is in itself a sense activity. But what does he exclude? I mean, this is very crucial and of decisive importance. What does he exclude?

Student: It excludes anything that is not empirical.

LS: Yes, but state it positively, if possible, in his language.

Student: General ideas.

LS: That is too general. In a way a child does have general ideas. For example, when he is ten years old, he knows this is a man, and this is a man, and this is a man; and so he has general ideas.

Student: The innate ideas or faculties.

LS: Yes, that is clear. But what kind of knowledge?

Student: Do you mean the distinction between reasoning and the faculty, that reason [inaudible].

LS: Well, you can put it this way. But you see, traditionally the knowledge of sense objects, in the widest sense, was called physics—in the widest sense, including all natural things. And there was another discipline which dealt with other subjects.

Student: Metaphysics.

LS: Metaphysics. And this¹, according to some very well-known views, this is based no longer on mere sense experience. Now, all metaphysical knowledge of any kind is to be excluded from education of children. But—and what, may I ask, is the highest subject of metaphysics in the traditional sense, the only sense in which Rousseau knew it?

Student: God.

LS: God; this is the point. I mean, this is a polite way of making clear, no word about God to a child. So, it is very meaningful, then, and not a casual remark. How would you state, after what you have read and what we have discussed before, the ideal of education which Rousseau presents in the *Emile* as far as we have read it hitherto? What kind of man or human being does he have in mind toward which he is working in guiding the child?

Student: In this state it is purely a physical development of the child.

LS: Yes, but, even there All right, we limit ourselves entirely² [to] the training of the body. What is that training to effect? I mean, there are various ends you can pursue in giving a child bodily training. Some of the passages youⁱ mentioned already show that: the maximum self-sufficiency, so that he is as independent of other human beings as possible. He can live in every climate. He is infinitely transplantable. But this cannot be understood if one does not take into consideration what the full aim of the education is, not merely the aim of the bodily training.

Student: [Not only independence from other people but also] independence of the opinions³ [from] other people, as well.

LS: He had to be a perfectly self-sufficient human being, not to depend in any way on them. This we must always keep in mind. Now, before we turn to the discussion of our assignment, I would like to remind you of something which I have said before. I was glad that you did not tell us again—although you would have had plenty of opportunity for doing so—how self-contradictory Rousseau's statements are. This is of course always true. But as I said last time, in order to find one's bearing in these millions of self-contradictions, one must reduce that million to a small number of typical contradictions which recur time and again. And once one has reduced the contradictions to the small number of fundamental contradictions, then one can begin to consider how to resolve these fundamental contradictions; and if they can be resolved, one has solved the problem of Rousseau's thought.

Now, starting again from the beginning, and repeating what I have said before, the first impression one has from Rousseau everywhere—but perhaps particularly in the *Emile*—is the key proposition, nature is good,⁴ which is a meaningless assertion if one does not see what it excludes. Society is bad, reason is bad, compared with nature. That is the meaning of it. And this includes also [that] sentiments belong to nature; sensibility, the heart, rather than reason. This is one block which goes through Rousseau. The second block, of which one sees relatively little in the *Emile*—at least hitherto—is his political passion: republican, democratic—of course not in the present-day American party sense—and there is a clear contradiction between this concern with a certain kind of political society and the condemnation of society as such. The third item which we have found—which we will not perhaps find in the *Emile*, but which we did find in the *Second Discourse*—is that agreement, basic agreement, explicitly stated by him, with Hobbes. And agreement with Locke, which you mentioned is of course equally important, but that is so to speak a subdivision, you know. The fundamental agreement, at least in moral, political matters, is with Hobbes, and therefore also with anyone who followed Hobbes, as Locke surely did to a considerable extent.

ⁱ Referring to a seminar paper, probably Father Vaughans's, which was not recorded.

I would like now to state the issue of the *Emile* in the light of this last item, because this question of Rousseau as follower and critic of Hobbes is susceptible of a much clearer analysis than the other points which I mentioned, like his concept of nature. Now, the starting point is for Rousseau as it is for Hobbes—but let me speak first of Hobbes.

Traditional natural law is based on the premise that there is a natural end for man as man. This is rejected by Hobbes; and consequently also by Rousseau, although Rousseau uses frequently teleological language. But we have seen some indications. The full development of the faculties is bad for the species—this he said in the *Second Discourse*. That is to say the reaching and striving for *the* natural end is bad. Or, as we have seen in the *Emile*, there are superfluous faculties, and—which is equally important—the actualization of the faculties is due to accident. In other words, there is no impulse in man towards the actualization of his faculties. This actualization is forced upon him by accident. The second point, which is connected with the first, is the powerlessness of reason. The traditional natural law teaching assumed that reason is powerful enough. The [new teaching is that the] fundamental moral phenomenon must be a passion. As regards natural law, natural law must be deduced from a passion, and this passion proves to be self-preservation, or, negatively stated, fear of violent death. It is also important that this is now called a passion and not a natural inclination, very important. This implies the fundamental moral political fact is a right and not a duty. All duties are derivative from self-obligation, from contract. Full agreement between Rousseau and Hobbes at this point. The third point deviates to some extent from Rousseau. Hobbes ascribed to natural law still too much power. Natural law by itself is powerless. We have to find a passion which takes the place of natural law; and Rousseau finds that, as you know, in what? What is the passion which takes the place of natural law in Rousseau?

Student: The sentiment of existence?

LS: No.

Student: Compassion?

LS: Compassion, or goodness, as he puts it. So, in other words, the primary and most fundamental thing is self-preservation, and self-preservation leads only to pursuit of your own self-interest without any regard for others. But then we have something in ourselves which mitigates that, which fulfills sub-rationally the function of natural law, or the moral law; and that is the passion of compassion or goodness, an aversion to inflict unnecessary evil. But still nevertheless, in spite of this important deviation from Hobbes, Rousseau says natural law becomes powerful only through the social contract, as Hobbes says, through the power of the sovereign. We can act justly only if it is safe to act justly. Now we must make the world safe for justice, and that means to establish strong government, with gallows and policemen, and the other implications. Now, here again there is full agreement between Rousseau and Hobbes, and one can say in a way Rousseau goes even further. In the last chapter of the second book of the *Social Contract*—I think it is the second book—there is a chapter, very short, on the division of law.ⁱⁱ What kinds of laws are there? Now, when you compare that with any other division of

ⁱⁱ Rousseau, 1994, 2.11, pp. 164-65.

laws, whether it is in Hobbes or in Locke or in Grotius, or whatever you have, you see one strange thing. Mr. Butterworth?

Mr. Butterworth: There is no mention of natural law.

LS: No mention of natural law any more. There are all kinds of laws: penal laws, civil laws, international laws, or what have you, but no natural law. Natural law as such disappears. So, this much about the agreement between Rousseau and Hobbes.

Now I come to a point where the disagreement will gradually appear—not in the first stage. We establish then, following Hobbes, a natural law teaching starting from the right of self-preservation, leading via the social contract to the order of civil society, the rights of the sovereign, and show by this very fact that natural law, while being the basis of society, becomes superfluous within society. Within society you can no longer appeal to the natural law. That is characteristic of both Hobbes and Rousseau—Locke is seemingly different. Now, how is this natural law teaching related to political reality? Answer: political reality falls short of it, even for Hobbes, because what Hobbes teaches regarding sovereignty of the state—the key teaching—exists almost nowhere. Sovereignty in Hobbes's sense was the exception rather than the rule. There were all kinds of [deviations]. Take the English: where does sovereignty reside? In the king? No. In the king and parliament; but that is [a problem for Hobbes]. We don't know where it fits. In fact, of course, one could say . . . well, in Hobbes's time it was really unsettled, and therefore there⁵ were all kinds of troubles. But in the eighteenth century it came to reside in parliament, but still [sovereignty in Hobbes's sense was the exception]. And other forms. There were fundamental laws in all the continental monarchies, i.e. laws not subject to the sovereign. The French king could not abolish the Salic law which decided about inheritance of the throne, as you know. He couldn't do that. That was a fundamental law. There were other fundamental laws . . . fundamental laws are incompatible with sovereignty, strict sovereignty. So, there was no sovereignty. As Hobbes wisely put it, his *Leviathan* is in a way as utopian as Plato's *Republic*.ⁱⁱⁱ It is not derived from experience, as you read in the textbooks—that he simply put down the practice of the European monarchies—the practice of the European monarchies was very different from what Hobbes taught. We see then that what happened in actual fact, what we may call the natural development of the human species, leads to *imperfect* social orders. Or, to state it in Rousseau's terms, the natural development of the human species leads mostly to despotisms. There are some exceptions—Sparta and Rome especially—but even they are very far from being perfect. The natural development of the human species surely leads through the state of savagery proper, of which Rousseau had so much to say in the *Second Discourse*. Savagery proper, and that means—although it is not *said* in the *Second Discourse*, but it is clearly implied—through a state of unlimited superstition. This is the present state of affairs, according to both Hobbes and Rousseau. Therefore the fully developed reason of some outstanding individuals, like Hobbes and Rousseau, must intervene in order to correct the natural development of the human species. Is this thought clear? It should be, because it has become a major element of the modern tradition. Things just happen. One stupidity is replaced by another stupidity; some are less stupid than others, but fundamentally they are not sound. The soundness can only come from a superior mind who arranges things. But how is this correction to take place, that is the question. Hobbes's answer was simple: enlightenment. Hobbes's *Leviathan*

ⁱⁱⁱ Hobbes, 1994, Chapter 31, para. 41, p. 243.

must become the textbook in Oxford and Cambridge, and there the gentry will learn the truth, and they will spread it, for example, by being justices of the peace, and whatever they may be.^{iv} That will come down to the peasantry eventually, at least in the country.

Here Rousseau disagrees. That was the reason why he got into troubles with the French *philosophes*, as they were called—the men around the *Encyclopédie*; some of you will surely have heard of that. I mean, Hobbes, partly by himself and partly through Locke, conquered France in the eighteenth century. The enlightened despotism became the ideal of these French *philosophes*, and they produced a big work called the *Encyclopédie*, which came out in 1751, I believe—for the first volume—and this preached⁶ enlightened despotism. And the so-called Physiocrats^v also belonged to this movement in a way. Now the most famous names [LS goes to the Blackboard] are d'Alembert and Diderot.^{vi} These were all acquainted with Rousseau. And there is a writing of Rousseau against d'Alembert which is very interesting, on the spectacles in France, on the theater in Geneva, because d'Alembert proposed that the Genevans, who were severe Calvinists, should finally come about and have a theater—tragedies and comedies, you know—and this was actively condemned by Calvinist thought as incompatible with true piety. So, Rousseau then attacked d'Alembert for this particular attempt to enlighten the Genevans, and defended the old austere order. This writing to d'Alembert has been translated by Mr. Bloom,^{vii} and he has brought it out—Mr. Bloom is also a former student of mine—it has been brought out in the Agora Collection of the Free Press.

But to come back now: so, Rousseau did not believe in the popular enlightenment. That was his great difference from Hobbes, Locke, Voltaire, and all the others. There is plenty of evidence for that. We have found it especially in the *First Discourse*, but also elsewhere. But the argument of the *Emile* is somewhat different. The correction of the natural development which leads only to imperfect society is not possible once men have grown up. These young men studying in Oxford or in Cambridge—the gentry whom Hobbes wanted to re-teach, re-educate—are too old for that, even if they are only sixteen or eighteen. This correction is not possible once men have grown up. It must begin, so to speak, at the moment of birth; surely in the earliest childhood. Reason is powerless to eradicate the prejudices in grown-up men, including adolescents. Education must be natural from the very beginning. Prejudices must not even be permitted ever to enter. Once they enter, you are lost. That is the obvious message of the *Emile*. This is the connection with the whole doctrine.

Let us turn now to our assignment. We will find quite a bit of confirmation about all this and other things in reading it. Let us turn to page 78 in the translation, in the third paragraph towards the end. This is in his discussion of La Fontaine's fable, the crow and the fox. We need only the end of this paragraph.

^{iv} Hobbes, 1994, Chapter 31, para. 41, pp. 243-44.

^v The physiocrats, a group of economic and political thinkers whose influence peaked in the latter half of the eighteenth century, advocated loosening restrictions on economic activity but argued that a kind of despotism would be required to protect the framework in which economic activity takes place.

^{vi} Jean Baptiste Le Rond d'Alembert (1717-83) co-edited the *Encyclopédie* with Diderot and is otherwise best known for his work in mathematics.

^{vii} Allan Bloom (1930-1992). Translator of the *Letter to D'Alembert*, *Emile*, and Plato's *Republic* and author of *Closing of the American Mind* (1987).

Mr. Reinken: “This is the way you train your pupil in that spirit of right judgment, which rejects all but reasonable arguments, and is able to distinguish between truth and falsehood in other tales.”^{viii}

LS: “In the tales of someone else.” So, in other words, this is the goal of education from the very beginning: a child must be enabled to have and at least to acquire judicious criticism, which is not impressed by anyone, and which can distinguish between truth and falsehood in the narratives of others. So, the ordinary education, not only by fables, but also by fairy tales of course, would be the same thing. That is what Rousseau means: if you tell them of dwarves and giants, and the wolf and the grandmother, the child will believe anything. If a wolf can answer these famous questions—you know: why do you have such big ears, and such a big mouth—then, if wolves can talk, God knows what can talk, or what can do what. Now, let us turn to page 80, paragraph 4, second half.

Mr. Reinken: “Society requires a rule of morality in our words; it also requires a rule of morality in our deeds; and these two rules are quite different. The former is contained in the Catechism and it is left there; the other is contained in La Fontaine's fables for children and his tales for mothers. The same author does for both.”^{ix}

LS: This reminds you of the question raised in the very beginning, of the twofold or even threefold education people undergo in France at that time—“we undergo,” as he puts it—and which are contradictory. We come to that later. Page 81, paragraph 2.

Mr. Reinken: “If children are not to be required to do anything as a matter of obedience, it follows that they will only learn what they perceive to be of real and present value, either for use or enjoyment; what other motive could they have for learning?”^x

LS: Do you understand that? This is a key principle of his education. We can put it this way: clear and distinct knowledge from the very beginning. A child must not be asked to do anything for which he doesn't have a reason which *he* understands. He cannot have clear and distinct knowledge in the way a philosopher can have it—that goes without saying—but as much as possible. Same thought on page 82, paragraph 4. Let us read the beginning of that paragraph.

Mr. Reinken: “If, in accordance with the plan I have sketched—”

LS: “I have begun to sketch.” I mean, she is really In other words, you cannot trust a translation in any way.

Mr. Reinken: “you follow rules which are just the opposite of the established practice, if instead of taking your scholar far afield, instead of wandering with him in distant places, in far-off lands, in remote centuries, in the ends of the earth, and in the very heavens themselves, you try to keep

^{viii} *E*, 353; 250.

^{ix} *E*, 357; 253.

^x *E*, 357; 253.

him to himself, to his own concerns, you will then find him able to perceive, to remember, and even to reason; this is nature's order."^{xi}

LS: Stop here. That only confirms the same thing. The child has a narrow horizon, but it is possible to think rationally in that narrow horizon as much as in the broadest possible horizon. If you ask this child to act and think rationally in a *man's* horizon, you demand too much; the child is wholly unable to do that. But within his small horizon, he can be as rational as the grown-up man in his. This is the goal of education. The perfectly unprejudiced child, that is the method of nature. That is to say, no opinion, no prejudice enters. He refers in the sequel, on page 84 or thereabouts, to Spartan education: at the end of the first paragraph.

Mr. Reinken: "This was the education of the Spartans; they were not taught to stick to their books, they were set to steal their dinners. Were they any the worse for it in after life? Ever ready for victory, they crushed their foes in every kind of warfare, and the prating Athenians were as much afraid of their words as of their blows."^{xii}

LS: This I mention⁷ here [only] because the Spartans did not, after all, give their children a strictly private education with a tutor. They gave them public education. And this is an indication that the antagonism between private and public education emphasized at the very beginning, between the education of man and the education of the citizens, will be overcome in the *Emile* to some extent. It will not remain at the extreme antagonism stated at the beginning. Now, let us look at page 84, paragraph 4.

Mr. Reinken: "Take the opposite course with your pupil; let him always think he is master while you are really master. There is no subjection so complete as that which preserves the forms of freedom;—"

LS: Why does she not say "the *appearance* of liberty"?^{xiii} I'm sorry I have to blame a member of the fair sex. There are many men who translate in the same manner, I grant you. Yes?

Mr. Reinken: "it is thus that the will itself is taken captive. Is not this poor child, without knowledge, strength, or wisdom, entirely at your mercy? Are you not master of his whole environment so far as it affects him? Cannot you make of him what you please? His work and play, his pleasure and pain, are they not, unknown to him, under your control? No doubt he ought only to do what he wants, but he ought to want to do nothing but what you want him to do. He should never take a step you have not foreseen, nor utter a word you could not foretell."^{xiv}

LS: This is, I think, also a very important point. One could say Rousseau's natural education is the most artificial education imaginable. It is based on a systematic deception from the very beginning. Artificial, unnatural. Nothing is truly spontaneous; it is all arranged. And one can say critically against Rousseau [that] it⁸ [has] this artificial character because it is based on the untrue premise that man is by nature asocial; and therefore the very notion of the solitary child is in

^{xi} *E*, 359; 255.

^{xii} *E*, 362; 257.

^{xiii} The phrase in question is "*l'apparence de la liberté*."

^{xiv} *E*, 362-63; 257-58.

agreement with this false principle. One only has to think of how he is kept away from other children with whom he would wish to play. Obviously he sees other children and then he hears things which he has never heard before. Someone says to him, you lie; he has no inkling of lying, and then suddenly he understands that. He has become corrupted for the rest of his days, according to Rousseau. But how would Rousseau defend himself? He can of course not deny the utterly artificial character of his education, but how would he justify it?

Student: To be natural does not necessarily mean that you don't need habituation. He might agree to that extent with an Aristotelian view.

LS: No.

Student: To give history direction is necessary, because the environment is no longer natural.

LS: Yes; he said something to this effect near the beginning.^{xv} In other words, the alternative to a so-called natural education in a wholly artificial world is not truly natural. Artifice enters into education from every point of view. When you say to a child when he asks you how are children born—a question which Rousseau discusses later—you say the stork brings them, or something to this effect—then you also use artifice. Rousseau uses other artifices, but he would say, artifices you have to use. But the question is, what purpose do the artifices serve? And he says his education is natural in spite of its artificial character, because the purpose it serves is the natural man, the natural man being the wholly self-sufficient individual, or *as* self-sufficient as possible. We can have another example of that when you turn to page 102, the second paragraph—we will have to come back.

Mr. Reinken: What is the context?

LS: Playing with other children—that is the point—which Emile is permitted.

Mr. Reinken: “Picture to yourself, a youthful Hercules returning, box in hand, quite proud of his expedition. The box is placed on the table and opened with great ceremony. I can hear the bursts of laughter the shouts of the merry party when, instead of the looked-for sweets, he finds, neatly arranged on moss or cotton-wool, a beetle, a snail, a bit of coal, a few acorns, a turnip, or some such thing. Another time in a newly whitewashed room, a toy or some small article of furniture would be hung on the wall and the children would have to fetch it without touching the wall. When the child who fetches it comes back, if he has failed ever so little to fulfill the conditions, a dab of white on the brim of his cap, the tip of his shoe, the flap of his coat or his sleeve, will betray his lack of skill.”^{xvi}

LS: What I wanted only to show here is that of course competition, pride, disappointment of pride and so forth—all these things enter; and there are many other examples of that. But the justification of it, you will probably find here on page 109. This was still within the limits of today's assignment, I believe.

^{xv} E, 245; 161.

^{xvi} E, 387; 278

Student: Yes: to 114.

LS: 109, in the second paragraph.

Mr. Reinken: “Moreover, in this occupation as in others, I do not intend my pupil to play by himself; I mean to make it pleasanter for him by always sharing it with him. He shall have no other rival; but mine will be a continual rivalry, and there will be no risk attaching to it; it will give interest to his pursuits without awaking jealousy between us.”^{xvii}

LS: Here he admits that rivalry is bound to come in, but he believes if *he* is the only rival of Emile, no harm can come of it. Well, it is clear that this is no completely satisfactory solution from his point of view. *If* rivalry, pride, feelings of superiority or inferiority are completely deadly to the human soul, he cannot avoid it by any artifice. And Rousseau will later also admit it, as we shall see.

Student: Sharing is pleasant for him, too. Doesn’t that mean an admission of sociality?

LS: Yes; but this is one which is more akin with compassion, which has nothing to do with potential enmity. You see, rivalry means potential enmity, whereas sharing of pleasures⁹ [does] not in itself—if it is genuine sharing—of course¹⁰ [contain anything] of enmity.

Student: But sharing is—

LS: A social phenomenon, yes. Well, this cannot be maintained, that man is by nature asocial; that must be modified considerably. Now, let us return to the earlier passages. We turn to page 89. Read this paragraph which begins “In this way you will make him patient,” and so on, meaning, “never forbid and never command,” that which we have heard so often. Now, what does he say here? Page 89, paragraph 2.

Mr. Reinken: “As for me, I received him somewhat gravely, but without blame and without mockery, and for fear he should find out we had been playing with him, I declined to take him out walking that day. Next day I was well pleased to find that he passed in triumph with me through the very same people who had mocked him the previous day, when they met him out by himself. You may be sure he never threatened to go out without me again.”^{xviii}

LS: You see again, the constant interference of the social feelings of superiority and inferiority can in no way be avoided. We come now to this passage which was emphasized by Father Vaughan regarding the doctrine of knowledge. That is on page 89, bottom, to the beginning of the next page: “The first natural movements of man”

^{xvii} E, 398; 286.

^{xviii} E, 368; 262.

Mr. Reinken: “As the first natural movement of man is to measure himself with his environment—”^{xix}

LS: “with everything which surrounds him.” I believe that is a bit better than “environment,” where you take the environment as one block; whereas when you say “everything which surrounds him,” you see this environment consists of many things. No one has ever seen an environment as environment, but he has seen the things which surround him. Yes?

Mr. Reinken: “to discover in every object he sees those sensible qualities—”

LS: “all sensible qualities.” That is also interesting. Well, I cannot correct her all the time, but from time to time only to warn you, if you want to study Rousseau, you have to learn French. Yes?

Mr. Reinken: “all sensible qualities which may concern himself, so his first study is a kind of experimental physics for his own preservation.”

LS: “relative to his own preservation.”

Mr. Reinken: “He is turned away from this and sent to speculative studies before he has found his proper place in the world.”

LS: You see what this means: no metaphysics, in any sense of the word.

Mr. Reinken: “While his delicate and flexible limbs can adjust themselves to the bodies upon which they are intended to act, while his senses are keen and as yet free from illusions—”^{xx}

LS: You see: prejudices are secondary. The first things are—in present-day language, which Rousseau does not [use] here—pure sense data. No opinion, no prejudices ever enter, and let us not tamper with that. That is also another example of what Rousseau means [by] “nature is good.” These primary data are all sound and true. What we make with them by our prejudices, by not reasoning properly, that is the bad thing. Yes?

Mr. Seltzer: When Rousseau uses the example of a child in conventional society that he knew, or that he was the tutor of, as in this case, rather than keeping with Emile, would you say that we have to think carefully about why the departure occurs, or is it not crucial?

LS: I don’t know what you mean by that exactly. Well, he is not brought up with anyone, with any other child.

Mr. Seltzer: Emile [isn’t]. But occasionally in this section, Rousseau refers to other children rather than Emile; that he was hired as^{xxi}

^{xix} The reader, who has otherwise followed the Foxley translation, briefly departs from it here, perhaps prompted by Strauss’s “the first natural movements” The Foxley has “Man’s primary natural goals are” The reader returns to the Foxley when he continues with “to discover”

^{xx} *E*, 369-70; 263.

LS: No; that he does partly in contrast to the others: look at how the French society bring up their children and how unreasonable; and look how I bring up Emile. That is one point. But this is uninteresting, because that is mere polemics.

Mr. Seltzer: I mean, when he refers to a child whom he tutored—the father hired him to tutor a child.

LS: Oh, I see. This of course was a case not as clean as the case of Emile, sure; it was a non-controlled experiment. Here we have a controlled experiment. That is easy. But the difficulty is, of course, that Emile cannot possibly be kept from prejudiced human beings, valets, maids, and so on, and he cannot possibly be kept from other children, because that would create a . . . A child who has never played with other children is really a kind of freak. And therefore he has to permit that. And this is of course an inevitable difficulty, which he admits, but which may very well endanger the whole thing, as he, I believe, also knows. So, I believe the difficulty as you stated it does not exist. Rousseau says, the *Emile* is an ideal case which can *never* be actualized; never. You can only approximate it, and to different degrees. Rousseau is saying, take this as your model and approximate it in the case of your children as much as you can. This is what he means. Mr. Johnson?

Mr. Johnson: I was thinking: there was one case where there was a race, and he is going to teach the child discipline.¹¹ He goes through several pages with this specific example, and he is careful to point out to us in the beginning that he is experimenting, the whole experiment of the child.^{xxii} This child is not Emile. There were of course other children who were racing. Would you say that this was the main reason, merely the fact that there were other children that have to be involved, and therefore. . . ?

LS: No. We must distinguish two things: A) when Rousseau speaks of actual experience he had as a tutor or as an observer with other children: these are of course actual facts, and they can be either good or bad approximations to the ideal education. That is one thing. And the other thing is when he speaks of Emile, the guinea pig, and sees how even in that ideal case you cannot have completely frictionless motion, not a completely air-tight [test] of the hypothesis. Mr. Morrison?

Mr. Morrison: I was going to say along the same lines: it has seemed to me that¹² when he wanted to say something about the fact that friction was bound to come in¹³—and I think that Mr. Seltzer was implying [this]—that he deliberately goes to these other examples in order to . . . e leaves Emile in order to point out the fact that Emile is [an ideal,] that the frictionless motion is not possible.

LS: Yes, but I believe he would still say this case . . . or example, he had the case of a Lord Hyde, an acquaintance of his—I don't know whether you have read that, whether we are as far—¹⁴this [case] is an approximation, he would say.^{xxiii} But of course that refers only to special

^{xxi} What Mr. Seltzer has in mind is the kind of example to which Rousseau has just referred, of a spoiled child whom Rousseau actually tutored, as opposed to Emile himself.

^{xxii} *E*, 392-96; 282-85.

^{xxiii} *E*, 424-25; 307.

cases. This boy was well trained by his tutor in observing, and his mind was not cluttered with book-learning; that was very good. But in other respects—that is implied—the education was of course not a model. In other words, here and there educators do some of the good things, and Rousseau tries to bring these successes in limited points together, making a whole of it, and make clear the principle of it. That is what he does in the *Emile*. But this whole as presented here is admittedly not feasible. Now let us turn to the next paragraph where we stopped.

Mr. Reinken: “Before you can practice an art you must first get your tools; and if you are to make good use of those tools, they must be fashioned sufficiently strong to stand use. To learn to think we must therefore exercise our limbs, our senses, and our bodily organs, which are the tools of the intellect; and to get the best use out of these tools, the body which supplies us with them must be strong and healthy. Not only is it quite a mistake that true reason is developed apart from the body, but it is a good bodily constitution which makes the workings of the mind easy and correct.”^{xxiv}

LS: This passage was discussed by Father Vaughan, and he felt that this was somehow something of an overstatement. Well, the strongest statement along these lines which I know—which goes much beyond the traditional saying, a healthy mind in a healthy body, much beyond that—occurs in Spinoza’s *Ethics*, part 5, proposition 39: “He who has a body apt for most things has a mind whose largest part is eternal.”^{xxv} Translated: he who has a body most apt to the most things has the most perfect mind: strict parallelism between body and soul. Of course the basis of that in Spinoza surely is his doctrine of the parallelism of body and soul, the doctrine which is somehow the background of much of eighteenth-century thought. Rousseau depends on the physics or the metaphysics of his age, there is no question. The dependence on Locke was another sign of it.

Student: Is there any reason why he said “true reason” in that passage?

LS: Where?

Student: Where he says that true reason developed apart from the body is a mistake.

LS: Yes. In other words, in contradistinction to a sham reason or corrupted reason. Perhaps we turn to page 96, fifth paragraph, at the beginning.

Mr. Reinken: “An exclusive education, which merely tends to keep those who have received it apart from the mass of mankind, always selects such teaching as is costly rather than cheap, even when the latter is of more use.”^{xxvi}

LS: Let us stop here. In a way of course Emile’s education is the most exclusive of all educations. But this is a superficial difficulty, superficial insofar as Rousseau would say it is not meant to be exclusive, for privileged human beings, to make them privileged. It is an education

^{xxiv} E, 370; 264.

^{xxv} Baruch de Spinoza, *Ethics*, ed. And trans. Edwin Curley (London: Penguin Books, 1996), 178.

^{xxvi} E, 379; 271.

of a common man, *un homme vulgaire*. Page 97, bottom. Let us read only the second half of this paragraph.

Mr. Reinken: “We are better off than they while the sun shines; in the dark it is their turn to be our guide. We are blind half our time, with this difference: the really blind always know what to do, while we are afraid to stir in the dark. We have lights, you say. What! Always artificial aids.”^{xxvii}

LS: “Always machines,” he said. In other words, we should be as good in darkness as the blind are in darkness. I mean, to be able to find our way without lights. Again, the principle is the same: the greatest possible self-sufficiency, the greatest possible. And what the greatest possible self-sufficiency is, we know in this respect: we know empirically from the observation of blind people who don’t need light, who don’t need light and can walk without light. The greatest possible independence of machines, of any artifacts. This is all one thought: independence of machines, independence of opinions of other men. And, positively stated, clear and distinct knowledge gives the greatest self-sufficiency possible. The education is natural education because man is by nature a self-sufficient individual, because man is by nature asocial. We come always back to that. Let us turn to page 98, the third paragraph.

Mr. Reinken: “I would have plenty of games in the dark! This suggestion is more valuable than it seems at first sight. Men are naturally afraid of the dark; so are some animals. Only a few men are freed from this burden by knowledge, determination, and courage. I have seen thinkers, unbelievers, philosophers, exceedingly brave—”

LS: “Soldiers” after “the philosophers”: “soldiers intrepid in plain day, trembling, in the night like women.”

Mr. Reinken: “at the rustling of a leaf in the dark. This terror is put down to nurses’ tales; this is a mistake; it has a natural cause. What is this cause? What makes the deaf suspicious—”

LS: “The same which makes the deaf suspicious and the people superstitious.” Namely?

Mr. Reinken: “Ignorance of the things about us, and of what is taking place around us.”^{xxviii}

LS: Let us stop here. So, not simply opinion—tales of nurses and so on—but ignorance is the cause of superstition and prejudices. In other words, superstition has a natural cause. It arises independently of opinion. This means that natural man is superstitious: remember the savages of the *Second Discourse*. Emile, in contradistinction to the savage, will not have superstitions; for—and here we come back to the argument—the savage as superstitious man does not live in the natural world, but in the world of imagination. Natural man in the strict sense—and Rousseau does not always use the term natural man in the strict sense—is man living entirely in the natural world, and not in the world even of his own imagination. Natural man in the strict sense is a man fully awake. In the light of naturalness thus understood, almost all men at all times, and surely men in the state of nature, have been and are unnatural. But naturalness thus understood is indeed

^{xxvii} E, 381; 27.

^{xxviii} E, 382; 274.

naturalness as an end—*telos*. This connection with imagination becomes perfectly clear from the note to this particular passage, which is too long to read. It is a quote from Buffon, the famous naturalist. Read perhaps the last sentence of this note, the quotation from Buffon.

Mr. Reinken: “There is, therefore, a natural ground for the tendency to see ghosts, and these appearances are not merely the creation of the imagination, as the men of science would have us think.”^{xxix}

LS: So, in other words, that is even stronger. Even without the imagination, specters arise naturally. Let us turn to page 100, the end of paragraph 1.

Mr. Reinken: “I hear a noise, it is a robber; I hear nothing, it is a ghost. The watchfulness inspired by the instinct of self-preservation only makes me more afraid. Everything that ought to reassure me exists only for my reason, and the voice of instinct is louder than that of reason. What is the good of thinking there is nothing to be afraid of, since in that case there is nothing we can do? The cause indicates the cure. In everything habit overpowers imagination; it is only aroused by what is new. It is no longer imagination, but memory which is concerned with what we see every day, and that is the reason of the maxim, ‘From the accustomed things there is no passion—’^{xxx}

LS: “derives no passion.”

Mr. Reinken: “for it is only at the flame of imagination that the passions are kindled. Therefore do not argue with any one whom you want to cure of the fear of darkness; take him often into dark places and be assured this practice will be of more avail than all the arguments of philosophy. The tiler on the roof does not know what it is to be dizzy, and those who are used to the dark will not will not be afraid.”^{xxxi}

LS: You see, Rousseau speaks here again of his difference from what he calls the philosophers. And the difference is this: reason by itself cannot liberate man from the power of imagination and the needs of the instinct. You need in addition habituation. Now, this was of course no innovation; do you remember someone who had said something to this effect before?

Student: Aristotle.

LS: Yes; and Plato, too. This was only a consequence of a certain kind of philosophy, the so-called rationalist philosophy of the eighteenth century. On the same page, the fourth paragraph.

Mr. Reinken: “There comes a stage in life beyond which we progress backwards. I feel I have reached this stage. I am, so to speak, returning to a past career. The approach of age makes us recall the happy days of our childhood.”^{xxxii}

^{xxix} E, 383; 274.

^{xxx} This appears to be the reader’s or transcriber’s translation of “ab assuetis not fit passio,” which Foxley does not translate. I cannot locate the original source of this quotation.

^{xxxi} E, 384; 275.

^{xxxii} E, 385; 276.

LS: Yes; he says “of the first age,” and this has, of course, an ambiguity. While in the immediate context it naturally refers to childhood, it can also mean something else: the first age of the world, the childhood of the human race. Let us stop here. You remember this very phrase, “the first age,” occurs in this passage in the *Second Discourse* where he praises the state of the savages.^{xxxiii} [Inaudible]. This throws again light on the reason why Rousseau questions teleology. Maturity is not *simply*, i.e. in every respect, superior to childhood, which I believe everyone would admit. The question is only whether it is superior in the decisive respect, not in every respect. But this way of thinking which Rousseau adopts leads eventually, of course, to the equality of all ages, babyhood up to the last decrepitude of the man of 100.

END OF TAPE SIDE ONE.

LS: [In progress] —and the equality of the ages, also to the equality of the epochs, the equality of cultures; things with which we are all but too familiar. Now, in the sequel, page 100, paragraph 5 following, Rousseau gives an example from his own life.^{xxxiv} We simply don’t have the time to read all this, but, when he was as a young man in pension with a Protestant minister, M. Lamercier: now, what does the example show? I can only state my opinion; we cannot read it. The example, it seems to me, shows in fact—as distinguished from Rousseau’s interpretation—that fear of being ridiculed, of being disgraced, of bad opinion, enables one to overcome fear of ghosts and darkness; and I have no doubt that this is true. But this means, of course, something which is not natural, in Rousseau’s opinion—you know, fear of the opinions of others—may enable us to overcome this kind of fear. This has something to do with the question we have taken up on an earlier occasion, which was stated as follows: can Rousseau have disregarded or overlooked the phenomenon of what Plato calls “spiritedness,” or the inability of children or early men to distinguish properly between wills and things? You remember that discussion we had: can the child really see that the stone which hurts him, or the chair which hurts him, doesn’t have a will of its own; and is this distinction between wills and things not beyond the understanding of a small child, at any rate? Now, let us turn to page 103, paragraph 4.

Student: May I ask: with this darkness thing . . . it seemed to me, when looking at this that there was a . . . I felt sort of the shadow of an allegory looking over my shoulder.

LS: In the Lamercier story?

Student: Yes; and the whole episode, why he gives such attention to this business of the child being able to see in the dark and being happy in the dark. I found myself wondering whether there wasn’t some oblique, perhaps discreetly veiled reference to—anticipating later discussions—to religious questions.

LS: Yes, that is all there. What does “the man without prejudices” mean, the man who has no fear of ghosts? That goes much further. Again, some knowledge of Hobbes is helpful. Now, how does Hobbes define religion? Does anyone remember that?

^{xxxiii} *SD*, 160; 40.

^{xxxiv} *E*, 385-86; 276-77.

Student: Fear of the powers invisible.^{xxxv}

LS: Fear of powers invisible, yes, and he also uses the word “ghosts”; these are together. His open attack on religion has a title: “¹⁵[Of] the Kingdom of Darkness.” Sure: darkness, ghosts versus what does enlightenment mean? The world which is clear, sunshine, and in principle everything perfectly clear, no enigma of any kind remains.

Student: But the point would be, it seems to me, that it is a sort of double-edged one, as it seems to be later when we come to it, that for Rousseau there is not light, there is in fact darkness; and you have got to realize that it is darkness, and go by touch, not try to go by sight.

LS: Yes, this is darkness, natural darkness. But natural darkness must not become—I use again Hobbesian language—spiritual darkness, you know. After all, is it possible—to take the lowest level of the argument as it is presented here—is it not possible to be in the dark, have no light available, artificial light, without fear? It is humanly possible.

Student: And if you rely, particularly, on the sense of touch.

LS: Yes; the more you cultivate the senses which may supply for the sense of sight, the freer you are from such fears. I repeat it again and again: the ideal of education presented in the *Emile* is the man perfectly free from prejudices. So, not only was he not instilled with prejudices by all kinds of people in his childhood, even the natural roots of prejudices have become atrophied. That is the point. I mean, in a way that is the most rationalistic book ever written; and it is very strange that Rousseau wrote it. I mean, the other philosophers of his age would of course not have interfered particularly with the education. I have not read for this purpose, as I should have read, Locke’s *Treatises of Education*. There are two treatises of Locke on education: one is—I forgot the title—one I read, and that deals with the education of a gentleman, and this is a very charming piece; that I have read a relatively short time ago. But there is another treatise, the one to which Rousseau refers, which I have not read; but I don’t believe that Locke would ever go so far. I think that is indicated by Rousseau’s polemics.^{xxxvi} Yes, Mr. Seltzer?

Mr. Seltzer: In this Lambercier story, where the teaching is that fear of being ridiculed enables one to overcome fear of ghosts

LS: Yes, but this indication is not stressed by Rousseau. In other words, that it was a kind of vanity which was used is not stressed by Rousseau. But Rousseau again would say, I don’t say that this is the ideal method—if there were many children, it would be a difficult thing. But it is only an indication that fear of darkness can be overcome.

^{xxxv} Hobbes, 1994, Chapter 6, para. 35, p. 31.

^{xxxvi} The treatise to which Rousseau refers and the treatise on educating a gentleman are the same text, *Some Thoughts Concerning Education. On the Conduct of the Understanding* is presumably the other work Strauss has in mind.

Mr. Seltzer: This goes back, though, to my earlier point: would Rousseau use on Emile fear of being ridiculed to overcome fear of darkness? It doesn't seem to me that he would, because he doesn't want to expose him to ridicule.

LS: Of course not; yes, sure. But I think, in fairness to Rousseau, one must make this distinction—that is the question which I believe Mr. Morrison raised before—sometimes there are examples of what, if I may say so, real people in the real world do, like this. And these of course are not immediately applicable to our guinea pig in the test-tube; that is clear. But on the other hand, they show that, for instance in this case, fear of darkness can be overcome. In this particular case in the real world, it was overcome by an appeal to the vanity of the young boy. This should not be done; but the example is good enough to show the possibility of overcoming it. We have to find a substitute for that; and I don't know, it is left to anybody's imagination how Rousseau himself as the tutor of Emile would have done it. And I suppose he would have said—well, this boy has of course no inkling of ghosts: Emile—there is something in it; what could it be? Is it a bird, or is it a four-footed animal, or what is it. Let's see. I tell you what we do: we will crawl, so that we cannot fall, each around this particular place; and we will always give sounds to each other to know that we are all right. Something of this kind, I suppose, where vanity would not be involved. That we have to figure out for ourselves. Yes?

Student: The sequel to the Lambercier story seems to imply very strongly that Rousseau is well aware of the importance of spiritedness, and he is nudging the reader.

LS: He wants to make him courageous, there is no question.

Student: But as to the necessity of this spiritedness, this almost anger, he says first, “You will ask if I am giving this anecdote as an example of the mirth which I say should accompany these games.”^{xxxvii}; and that paragraph concludes with saying that it is the reassurance of a number of people. Then he goes on and gives a description of another such game similar to his own which is plainly resting in vanity, emulation and superiority, and calls your attention to what it was, and says do not read my book if you expect me to tell you everything.

LS: That is perfectly right. He says all the time, I am speaking to intelligent people, not to people like M. de Formey—a critic, you know; that is a very nice way of [referring]¹⁶—to him,^{xxxviii} I would have to tell everything, and then it would be impossible to write any book. Now, in the case of vanity, we disposed of that. But what about fear? Of course Emile will have some fears within his limits—I mean he will not have fantastic fears, but he will have some fears—and he should be taught to overcome¹⁷ [them]: not by precepts, not by saying you coward, but by showing that there is no ground of fear. Well, that depends: for example, the dog may be a wholly unknown dog, and he may be very vicious, and really tear him to pieces, and so something [could be genuinely dangerous]. But he discusses that, how to treat harmless things, dangerous things, and things of which it is unknown whether they are harmless or dangerous; he has discussed that. I could not give the application in this particular case, but I think someone sufficiently interested could figure it out.

^{xxxvii} *E*, 386; 277.

^{xxxviii} Formey was the author of the *Anti-Emile*; See *E*, 1420 (description of note appended to original edition with a view to a new printing); 748, n. 6.

Student: To go back to the question I asked earlier about religion, whether there is sort of a general blast against prejudices, and so on; [that] is the main point. It seems to me that he does this [kind of thing] here, but that the position from which he does this is not quite so simple as might appear in that it is not really an enlightenment point of view; that really in a sense what he may be implying here, it seems to me, was that the natural state of man is in fact darkness, and not light. And it is for that reason that the sense of touch is much more important than the sense of vision; because he says some very strange things later here about the sense of vision, as if it were wrong always to try and look with the sense of vision: what you've got to do is to realize that you're in darkness, and go by touch.

LS: Well, this leads to a great problem. I do not exclude that—I haven't seen it, which doesn't mean anything—but because this is of course one great point. You know, the traditional view was the sense of sight is the noblest of the senses, and all our traditional terms—contemplation, *theoria*, whatever they are—are all vision; all point to the sense of sight, the noblest sense. And now But let us assume that the only things that are, are bodies and bodily. Would this not lead to the consequence that the sense of sight is not as important—and I think there is even some evidence of it, come to think of that; unfortunately my poor memory fails. There is a verse in Lucretius—you know, surely a materialistic author—in which he speaks of that. The verse begins with this: *corporis est tactus*^{xxxix}.^{xl} In other words, bodies can be known as bodies only by the sense of touch. Unfortunately I don't remember that, but I could look it up. So in other words, has this . . . again¹⁸ Hobbes: body—there is nothing but body, as Hobbes puts it. Does this not lead to the consequence that the sense of touch takes on an importance which it otherwise would not have? That is the kind of question one would have to consider. Let me see.

Student: He talks in several places of the necessity of correcting [sight]; he says you can't use your sense of sight unless

LS: That is a simple thing; I mean, that played a very great role in the psychology of the time—and in Berkeley especially, I remember—how we become aware of a thing, of anything, like a chair, or whatever it may be.¹⁹ Our sense of distance, for example: in order to acquire it, the sense of sight is not sufficient; it must go together with an exercise of the sense of touch as well. Now, I have been interested in that many years ago; and at the moment I cannot put it together. Let me see, what is that? [LS goes to the blackboard.] In the eighteenth century, second half of the eighteenth century, people proposed fundamentally a change in psychology. Up to that time it was understood there are two [parts of the soul] . . . the fundamental division of the soul: the cognitive parts—senses and [inaudible] and reason and so on—and the appetitive part: willing, desires. And then people said suddenly, there is need for a tri-partition—and this had had a terrific success—thinking, willing, *and* feeling. And the later tri-partition of philosophy, of a

^{xxxix} I changed this from *corpora et tange*"; while the phrase I have substituted does not occur in Lucretius, it is closer to the passage I think Strauss has in mind than what the transcriber has. Thanks to James Nichols for help figuring this out.

^{xl} I have been unable to track down the precise reference. The most likely seems 2:434-35 of *De Rerum Natura*: *tactus enim, tactus, pro numina sancta deorum, / corporis est sensus* or "touch and nothing but touch (by all that men call holy!) is the essence of all our bodily sensations" (Lucretius, *On The Nature of the Universe*, trans. Ronald Latham, rev. John Godwin (London: Penguin Books, 1994), 72.

certain kind of philosophy into logic, ethics, and aesthetics has something to do with this tri-partition. Now in this, connected with feeling—*sentir*—having sentiments. What is feeling, originally? [LS knocks on podium.] You see? I mean, this meaning of feeling was somewhat lost—I mean, of the sense of touch—but the connection was still there. That this is the truly, in a way the deepest of all awarenesses which we have, this is infinite. In a way it is quite good that we think of these implications some time and don't believe that these questions can be settled in a single seminar. To that extent, it was quite good that you brought that up. It surely has many [implications],²⁰ since the word sentiment is so crucial in Rousseau all the time . . . yes, sentiment, and that is primarily touch. Many, many years ago, when I was more interested in Hobbes than I am now at present, I collected some material about these things, but it is not present to my mind right now. But the simple starting point, it seems to me, of such a study would be the massive, brutal academic fact, the tri-partition of the soul along these lines: thinking, willing, feeling—instead of merely thinking and willing—which was proposed. You find this, I suppose, in every normal history of psychology—I *suppose*—and then one must work one's way backward and deeper, and then one can find out something. The whole problem of aesthetics in modern times is wholly unintelligible without going into this story of feelings. People didn't speak of feelings in this way before; or rather, the term occurs, but it meant something very different. The Aristotelian *analogon* to what is called feeling is to some extent *pathos*,²¹ being affected, anger, envy, desire and so on; being affected—a term which in this general way, *pathos*, applies also of course to non-human things as well: a stone is affected by rain, of course. Yes?

Student: There is a tie-in there to [inaudible], too complicated to work out elaborations: that if you are in the dark and you are finding your way by touch, one of the things you cannot do is see where you are going, in the sense of an end.

LS: No, rather this way—I mean I made it clear to myself in this simple way: you are on a couch in the night. It is dark; and then you hear some little noise, and you get something, you catch it; and you know it's a mouse, which is not for all people a pleasant experience. Still, I would say I think most people actually would still switch the light on, and only after having seen it would I say it *is* a mouse. Even if I was almost certain before that it was a mouse. You know, the enlightening thing, the sense which in the end lets us see, that makes us aware of verities, is not the sense of touch, but the sense of sight.

Student: I was thinking in terms of a journey, teleology.

LS: Yes, but that is, I believe a big [leap]. You know, these are²², if I may say so, the mistakes which young people make, that they see sometimes the links too directly. But some connection surely exists. But I believe the simpler way is to start from the question of how we become aware; whether, in becoming aware of bodies as bodies, the sense of touch does not have a certain aptness. By the way, according to a certain Aristotelian teaching, the sense of touch is in this sense the distinguished sense: that all living beings, all animals have it you know, even the lowest, whereas the sense of hearing and sense of sight is already limited to the higher animals. But this is only the reverse side of saying that the sense of sight is the highest, the most noble sense.

Now, let us turn to page 103, paragraph 4. I mean, these stories which Rousseau inserts, whether from his own life or others', must naturally be considered. He did not do this merely in order to fill the pages. To that extent I entirely agree with Mr. Morrison.

Mr. Reinken: "There are exercises by which the sense of touch is blunted and deadened, and others which sharpen it and make it delicate and discriminating. The former, which employ much movement and force for the continued impression of hard bodies, make the skin hard and thick, and deprive it of its natural sensitiveness."

LS: "The natural sentiment." This is a key word which we must keep in mind. Go on.

Mr. Reinken: "The latter are those which give variety to this feeling, by slight and repeated contact, so that the mind is attentive to constantly recurring impressions, and readily learns to discern their variations."^{xli}

LS: "*All* their modifications," he says. Now, let us stop here. This natural sentiment is necessarily modified by education, that is implied; i.e. almost destroyed, perhaps completely destroyed, or improved. So, we never remain at nature proper. Education is necessarily, we can say, an alienation from nature in Rousseau's sense. But this is not precise enough. The improvement preserves the natural, adding something to it, whereas the other destroys it. So, the natural education can be defined, within limits, also in this way: the natural education is of course a modification of the natural, but one which preserves the natural and adds something to it, whereas the bad education is that which is destructive of the natural. On page 105, the third paragraph, you find something else which is relevant to this question.

Mr. Reinken: "Here we must just reverse our former plan. Instead of simplifying the sensation, always reinforce it and verify it by means of another sense. Subject the eye to the hand, and, so to speak, restrain the precipitation of the former sense by the slower and more reasoned pace of the latter. For want of this sort of practice our sight measurements are very imperfect. We cannot correctly, and at a glance, estimate height, length, breadth, and distance; and the fact that engineers, surveyors, architects, masons, and painters are generally quicker to see and better able to estimate distances correctly, proves that the fault is not in our eyes, but in our use of them. Their occupations give them the training we lack—"

LS: "the experience," he says, which perhaps one should preserve.

Mr. Reinken: "and they check the equivocal results of the angle of vision by its accompanying experiences, which determine the relations of the two causes of this angle for their eyes."^{xlii}

LS: Yes. So, the *use* of our senses and their improvement coming from that use shows us what our senses can do; the unused senses become *useless* and atrophied, and therewith reveal to us the nature of our senses. Said in the greatest generality, our nature is characterized by perfectibility, and therefore we have to take into consideration the perfection in order to

^{xli} E, 389-90; 279-80.

^{xlii} E, 392; 281-82.

understand the nature in particular of our senses. We have to skip a lot. Page 109, in the third paragraph. Begin at the beginning.

Mr. Reinken: “We badly needed ornaments for our room, and now we have them ready to our hand. I will have our drawings framed—”

LS: In other words, the drawings which Emile is somehow induced to make.

Mr. Reinken: “framed and covered with good glass, so that no one will touch them, and thus seeing them where we put them, each of us has a motive for taking care of his own. I arrange them in order round the room, each drawing repeated some twenty or thirty times, thus showing the author's progress in each specimen, from the time when the house is merely a rude square, till its front view, its side view, its proportions, its light and shade are all exactly portrayed. These graduations will certainly furnish us with pictures, a source of interest to ourselves and of curiosity to others, which will spur us on to further emulation.”^{xliii}

LS: You see, emulation again. And later on in the same paragraph: “Thus each of us aspires to the *honor*” of this particular frame, and so on. So, without the stimulation of *amour-propre*, education is not possible, contrary to what it seemed to be at the beginning. This is one of these sweeping statements with which Rousseau begins and which was qualified in the sequel. As he puts it somewhere in the *Second Discourse*, all our virtues *and* our vices—but also our virtues—arise from *amour-propre*. Let us say from pride, and not from mere sense of self-preservation. We admire no one for the fact that he is alive, except in special circumstances when it was extremely difficult to survive; then we may impute to him certain qualities of endurance and whatnot. But the mere fact that a man is alive is not a recommendation, as you see whenever you apply for any job. I mean, if you say nothing but I am alive, that is not good enough. So, self-preservation as such is not sufficient; pride, concern with superiority, according to Rousseau, necessarily enters. We must never forget that. It is too easy to forget, and I have forgotten it myself more than once. Page 110, in the center of the third paragraph.

Mr. Reinken: “If I wish to measure an angle of 60° I describe from the apex of the angle, not an arc, but a complete circle, for with children nothing must be taken for granted.”^{xliv}

LS: “Nothing must be left understood.”^{xlv} Clear and distinct, fully conscious knowledge: this is the principle which goes through it. Let us turn to page 112, paragraph 2.

Mr. Reinken: “What is done can be done.”

LS: Yes; that is of course obviously true, and that is underlying Rousseau's examples. If someone says this is impossible, well, if²³ [Rousseau] has a single example how some tutor did it, he shows the feasibility by this very fact. Yes.

^{xliii} E, 398-99; 286-87.

^{xliv} E, 400; 288.

^{xlv} That is, nothing must be left to the understanding, or merely implied.

Mr. Reinken: “Now there is nothing commoner than to find nimble and skillful children whose limbs are as active as those of a man. They may be seen at any fair, swinging, walking on their hands, jumping, dancing on the tight rope. For many years past, troops of children have attracted spectators to the ballets at the Italian Comedy House. Who is there in Germany and Italy who has not heard of the famous pantomime company of Nicolini?”^{xlvi}

LS: And so on. Let us perhaps read the next paragraph. We cannot read all.

Mr. Reinken: “To my mind, these and many more examples prove that the supposed incapacity of children for our games is imaginary, and that if they are unsuccessful in some of them, it is for want of practice.”^{xlvi}

LS: Yes; we must also understand that: these are of course extreme examples. Rousseau does not want to make Emile a tightrope dancer, and I don’t know what other circus celebrities. What he wants to show by these examples is only that the greatest possible perfection, which is extremely rare, is natural education. It must be a meaningful²⁴ [perfection], not tightrope dancing. Man is infinitely more perfectible than he is assumed to be. That this became a large part of progressive education . . . I remember that they claimed that the distinction between a musical and a non-musical man is merely common sense, i.e. folklore, but not meaningful. Everyone can become musical. But the question of course is whether the effort to make, for example, me musical would be ever worth the effort. That is the question. But that with the necessary effort one can really make anyone God knows what, a physicist, or so on, musical, or a poet of sorts, I think one could take that for granted. In Germany, there was a proverb, you can teach a bear to dance. You know, bears can really be taught to dance, but you must admit that this is neither dancing, nor is the method which they use—very cruel method—a desirable educational device. On page 112, the fourth paragraph, you find another description again elucidating the meaning of a natural education.

Mr. Reinken: “You will tell me that with regard to the body I am falling into the same mistake of precocious development which I found fault with for the mind.”

LS: Meaning, by these examples of the tightrope dancers.

Mr. Reinken: “The cases are very different: in the one, progress is apparent only; in the other it is real.”

LS: Where is it apparent, and where is it real?

Student: When the child talks philosophy, it is only apparent.

LS: Yes; and the body . . . I mean, if he can tightrope dance, he *can*. But if he repeats phrases he has learned, that is only apparent. Good.

^{xlvi} E, 402; 289-90.

^{xlvi} E, 403; 290.

Mr. Reinken: “I have shown that children have not the mental development they appear to have, while they really do what they seem to do. Besides, we must never forget that all this should be play, the easy and voluntary control of the movements which nature demands of them, the art of varying their games to make them pleasanter, without the least bit of constraint to transform them into work; for what games do they play in which I cannot find material for instruction for them?”^{xlvi}

LS: Let us leave it here. In other words, what does it mean? The natural education: no compulsion; no precepts; movements demanded by nature, but facilitated by youth. And it is all to be done gladly: no sad pedant ramming it down the child’s throat. We have a few more pages. On page 113, the end of the second paragraph.

Mr. Reinken: “One can reckon the distance of a thunderstorm by the interval between the lightning and the thunder. Let the child learn all these facts, let him learn those that are within his reach by experiment, and discover the rest by induction; but I would far rather he knew nothing at all about them, than that you should tell him.”^{xl}

LS: Yes, in other words, clear and distinct knowledge which is self-acquired; maximum of self-sufficiency. He develops this a bit more fully in the sequel: cultivation of the senses, culture of nature, as demanded by nature; but also acquired in a natural manner—no violence. The variety of means of nature which here come together. Education necessarily is not simply natural, that goes without saying: it is a culture of nature. But the good education, according to Rousseau, is a cultivation of nature as nature demands it, and in a natural manner, i.e. not violence. This is a good education. Let us only read page 113, the fifth paragraph. The question comes now up regarding books; reading.

Mr. Reinken: “Teach him to speak plainly and distinctly, to articulate clearly, to pronounce correctly and without affectation, to perceive and imitate the right accent in prose and verse, and always to speak loud enough to be heard, but without speaking too loud—a common fault with school-children. Let there be no waste in anything.”^l

LS: Yes, that is all right, but I wonder how this is possible without precept. I don’t see how it could be done.

Student: He pretends to pay no attention to him if he spoke too loudly.

LS: Perhaps; I don’t know. But you must admit, is this not in the²⁵ [nature of the thing] more cumbersome—surely more cumbersome—and also not necessarily morally superior to simply saying don’t talk so loud. Or even if he says “I beg you don’t talk so loud; it hurts me.” What is practically the difference between that and a precept? Rousseau himself blames the old education, when parents said to their children “please,” where it is in fact a command. Is the mere form of command, the external form of command, so decisive? That would be the question. There are other things, by the way, which he doesn’t discuss, and which would be interesting; for

^{xlvi} E, 403; 290.

^{xl} E, 404; 291.

^l E, 405; 292.

example, the ordinary decencies regarding the digestive process: that children should not do certain things at the table, and even otherwise—wind, and this kind of thing. What will you do? Simply run out and say I can't stand that? Well, the whole question in general terms is, is precept as bad as Rousseau claims it is? That is, of course, the question to be addressed also to progressive education afterwards. Mr. Johnson.

Mr. Johnson: First, by precepts, do you just mean, “don't do this”?

LS: Yes.

Mr. Johnson: Because I was thinking, in terms of the examples which he has given with Emile, like when Emile^{li} would break the window, and he would get cold [inaudible];²⁶ [the governor would] fix the window again, and²⁷ [the child] would break it again, then you would put him away in a dark place where there were no windows.^{lii}

LS: Yes; just force, no commands; that is what the example [inaudible]. Force he can use. Just lock him in; even spank him. That is all right.

Mr. Johnson: Force, and not precept, and not violence—what about violence?

LS: The same. I mean, the distinction is unnecessary to make, unless you mean one shouldn't do anything in anger. No, he would surely say you shouldn't act in anger, because this would give a bad [example]. I mean, the brat may be unbearable, and this might lead to . . . There is a story, you know, of the perfect modern educator, who never gets angry and who permits the child to do everything and the consequence is that he becomes mad in the end, and he kills the child. You, see, that is also very . . .

Student: Isn't this sort of something like the form of precept? For example if I break the window I will automatically end up down there; my tutor will come in and take me down there.

LS: Yes, sure. In other words, I do not believe that this—I never believed—that this is the soundest education, but you must try to understand . . . I mean, that is relatively easy to dispose of such a [proposal] by all kinds of observations. But we must understand what drives Rousseau in this direction. I mean, what is the reason of all these proposals partly, on the face of them, reasonable and partly, on the face of them, unreasonable? And then it is always this: the self-sufficient individual, the man without any prejudices. And therefore the child should already be a child without prejudices, and if it is true that there is an essential connection between prejudice and authority, then no authority. And it can indeed be said that there is a connection between prejudice and authority: a command means, of course, I tell you, and I don't have to give you a reason. In some cases you can't give the reason, because, as Rousseau rightly says, how can a child know what will be good for him as a grown up man, a condition of which he has no concrete understanding? The old view was, you simply say this is not being done; it is naughty,

^{li} Considering the discussion the class has just had about the difference between examples concerning Emile and examples concerning other children, it is worth noting that the broken windows example is not about Emile.

^{lii} *E*, 333-34; 234.

period. And it worked reasonably well in many cases; in other cases it didn't work, but the working is no good criterion, because who has proven that the progressive education works? You must have heard of that: they discovered suddenly that Ivan, who knows how to read and write and to reckon better than Johnny might create a great danger to grown up Johnny—the grown up Ivan [will be a danger to the grown up Johnny] later. And so, this was not an entirely irrelevant consideration, [that] Johnny won't understand it. But the consequence is that the educational program has to be revised. I mean, that was on the lowest level, [the level] on which educational programs can be revised, but I think it was an improvement. And the idea behind it was of course this: no competition. All children are equal, not only in the eyes of God, but as far as their scholastic achievements are concerned; the presumption being no grades, no distinction, [inaudible] and so that no one feels himself superior to anyone else. Is this compatible with human life? That would be the question. I mean, whatever you take, sports or whatever else it may be, the inequality stares you in the face, and it is²⁸ mere make-believe to deny. I mean, what children have to be taught is that in spite of some superiorities which they may possess they still have to behave decently to those inferior to them, in this or that respect. That was the older view, more realistic. Now, Rousseau has something to do with this radical change. But what Rousseau has in mind, the overall goal which we must always keep in mind, is this (this is an experiment—and not merely an experiment for educators in the narrow sense; he doesn't write for mothers and fathers, he says elsewhere^{liii})²⁹: he wants to show—this is my understanding of the meaning of that—he wants to show when, at what point, for what reason, prejudice is absolutely necessary, and therewith what kind of prejudice is *the* most rational prejudice. It is difficult [inaudible]. That is, I believe, what we must do here. If I may use my old schema [blackboard]: here is the common starting point for the man and for the citizen. Man goes in this direction; citizen goes in this direction. Now, up to a certain point he educates Emile as a man, without any regard to society. And then he says he must become a citizen. [This is a] decisive [moment]. [Rousseau does] not leave it at the general remark or notion that man must live in society, but more specifically . . . but the decisive prejudice . . . to become a citizen means to become subject to authority, obviously. It means to become subject to some prejudice. And then here something is done; and then Emile arrives here, but in a much better way. In other words, he will be a much better citizen than if he were trained this way; much more rational, that is the notion.

So, there is a unity of his political writings proper, especially the *Social Contract* and the *Emile*, but it does not stare one in the face. One has to do some thinking in order to see that. Is there any other question any one of you would like to take up?

Student: Could you make the comparison between Rousseau's education, and his notion of education for the common citizen with Nietzsche's *Genealogy of Morals*?

LS: That would be very hard to do; because Nietzsche did not really question that sociality of man. Rousseau says man is the least gregarious animal; and Nietzsche says man is the most gregarious animal.^{liv} So a direct contrast is not possible here. Especially, Nietzsche rejects

^{liii} Rousseau, 2001, 211.

^{liv} In the *Beyond Good and Evil*, Aphorism, 199, Nietzsche observes that human beings have been in herds from the beginning and that, consequently, "obedience has been practiced best and cultivated longest among men" (Friedrich Nietzsche, *Beyond Good and Evil: Prelude to a Philosophy of the Future*,

absolutely the principle of no authority. Nietzsche says—you know, there is a paragraph which we discussed in the last Nietzsche seminar, in *Beyond Good and Evil*—that in a way [says] no, *any* authority is better than no authority; not from the utilitarian point of view, law and order, but from the point of view of making a man a man. You know, growing up without impediment; and he gives the example, he says, for example, the compulsion, say, to use only these and these forms of meter in poetry makes better poets than if they can just follow their nature by just pouring it out, you know?^{lv} Without such a resistance, without learning to walk on . . .

Student: But I had in mind that there were certain things in common.

LS: Yes, there are quite amazing things. But generally speaking, the relation is this: opposition. Nietzsche rejects the Rousseauan schema. But this rejection is based on something common which is not so easy to get. In other words, Nietzsche does not simply appeal from Rousseau to older writers; he goes in a way in the same direction much more radically than Rousseau does. I stated it once in a seminar on the *Genealogy of Morals*, how was that? Self-preservation and compassion in Rousseau . . . I cannot now, I am sorry, I don't remember that. But there is surely a close connection, a close *polemical* connection.

Student: I was interested in their different views in particular about man prior to any outside interference; in other words, I would say primitive man, and for example . . .

LS: Yes, but Nietzsche's primitive man in the *Genealogy of Morals* is a herd man absolutely;^{lvi} and the individuals emerge only after a long process of being molded by herd moralities, in opposition to that. Man is not from the beginning an individual, except in the bodily sense; but a man who follows his own law, his own genius, as Nietzsche says, that is the end of a very long process, and in no way the beginning; which is, in this respect, more realistic, surely, than what Rousseau seems to suggest.

Student: Isn't the sort of sovereign state [inaudible] some sort of an early state?

LS: Yes; and by the way, what Nietzsche says about this point is not particularly original. Bagehot in his book *Physics and Politics* developed that almost immediately after Darwin's work: the crucial importance of custom, of a frozen custom, to make the species stable, and this lasted for millennia.^{lvii} This vision is the same as in Nietzsche. And now the question is—just as for Bagehot himself, only Nietzsche is more complex—how did “progressive societies,” societies not simply custom-bound, emerge, and under what conditions did this happen? Bagehot's book is, I believe, usually not considered in connection with Nietzsche, but it seems to me when one reads these two books together, it is quite obvious, the connection.

ed. Rolf-Peter Hortsman and Judith Norman, trans. Judith Norman (Cambridge-New York: Cambridge University Press, 2002), pp. 86-87.

^{lv} Nietzsche, 2002. Aphorism 188, pp. 77-79.

^{lvi} See, for example, Aphorism 2. Friedrich Nietzsche, *The Genealogy of Morals*, ed. Keith Ansell Pearson, trans. Carol Diethe (Cambridge-New York: Cambridge University Press, 1997), 11-12.

^{lvii} Walter Bagehot, *Physics and Politics: or Thoughts on the Application of the Principles of “Natural Selection and “Inheritance” to Political Society* (New York: D. Appleton and Company, 1906), 50-54, 217-19.

So next time, who will read the paper?

END OF LECTURE.

¹ Deleted "is."

² Deleted "on."

³ Deleted "of."

⁴ Deleted "and."

⁵ Deleted "we."

⁶ Deleted "the."

⁷ Moved "only."

⁸ Deleted "does have."

⁹ Deleted "of."

¹⁰ Deleted "contains nothing."

¹¹ Deleted "and."

¹² Deleted "when the weaknesses—"

¹³ Deleted "it seemed to me, rather."

¹⁴ Deleted "and."

¹⁵ Deleted "To."

¹⁶ Deleted "a critic."

¹⁷ Deleted "it."

¹⁸ Changed from "against."

¹⁹ Deleted "That."

²⁰ Deleted "and."

²¹ Changed from "pathet."

²² Deleted "these."

²³ Deleted "he."

²⁴ Deleted "one."

²⁵ Deleted "natural."

²⁶ Deleted “he’d.”

²⁷ Deleted “he.”

²⁸ Deleted “not.”

²⁹ Deleted “is this.”

Session 8

[In progress] **LS:** —and I am very glad of that. Now there are three points which I would like to take up. First—no, generally, I would like to say you seemⁱ to be the first speaking in this seminar who has some knowledge, or has shown some knowledge, of the history of education after Rousseau. Have you—you have studied this development?

Student: Yes.

LS: Yes, that can be very helpful. Now, you said one difficulty you had which I did not quite understand, because you delivered your paper at a very great speed: and the food question,¹ how peoples are different by virtue of the food they take, you know? The beefsteak-eating Englishmen at one pole, and on the other some vegetarian nation. What was the difficulty you had? You do not believe that this is so important?

Student: What I said was [that] it was not yet established; I do not know whether, if that could be established. . . . They state that vegetarianism really promotes the health; meat-eating is bad for health, they say. But I do not know that they have established the connection between the character and the food.

LS: Good. In other words, Rousseau seems to be a vegetarian on rather dubious grounds; that is your impression.

Student: I have not heard this view before.

LS: Yes. Well, we have to take this up for another reason, too. Now, you emphasized quite rightly a point which we have disregarded completely, I think: that Rousseau regards it as best if the child is educated by his parents—his natural parents, and here we clearly have a case where a child who may have parents is regarded as if he were an orphan, and he has only his tutor. And how would you explain Rousseau's procedure, that he presents—although he admits that the father is the best educator for a child, why does he present a tutor as the best educator?

Student: [Inaudible, to the effect that he thought it was because Rousseau was giving us only the exceptional case.]

LS: Yes, but still, why does he prefer that exceptional case, as he obviously does?

Student: Would it be . . .

LS: I mean, what is bad influence, in Rousseau's point?

ⁱ Referring to the author of the seminar paper, not recorded.

Student: If the child is not allowed to preserve its own nature?

LS: More . . . that is too general. Prejudice; authority. And perhaps there was hardly any father who could be trusted in this respect; and he wanted to show the model for the father. So, in other words, as soon as you find a father who is as enlightened as Rousseau, it would be much better that the father will do it; but failing that, a tutor must . . . the father. I think this is what he means.

In connection with your references to later education doctrines which are based on Rousseau, I would like to mention only one little point. It's a question addressed to you. When Rousseau says, for example, "the country is better than the city for the child"; and then he means of course, as you stated, [that] country life is more natural than city life—would this be said today by this present-day up-to-date educationalist? In other words, to indicate—to show my difficulty more clearly, I would say this: from the point of view of present-day social science, country people have as much a culture as city people. I mean, the natural man in Rousseau's sense strictly speaking has no culture; because culture is distinguished from nature. And in present-day sociology, this is denied: wherever there are men there are cultures. Strictly speaking, how would they—how would this be stated today, if someone would feel that country life is preferable than—to city life from the point of view of bringing up children? How would the present-day theorist state that?

Student:

LS: Yes, but here—I mean—what I am interested in is, what is the present-day substitute for what was formerly called "natural," in contradistinction to artificial? After all ²this distinction between natural and artificial is not entirely arbitrary. For example, if you say—if you compare a man who has a wig on, or other unnatural things, in comparison to someone who does not have a wig on—

Student: Privileged and underprivileged children?

LS: Underprivileged—no; underprivileged are not necessarily [natural]. Think of these many tribes, underprivileged tribes who have rings through their noses, which is not exactly natural, is it? And all the other things they have, you know, the division—kinship division, and all this kind of thing.

Student: Adjusted?

LS: Yeah, but all are adjusted somehow to their environment.

Student: I thought the Dobu boys were thought to be exceedingly badly adjusted.

LS: Which?

Student: The Dobu boys.

LS: Which boys? I did not hear the word.

Student: From *Patterns of Culture*.ⁱⁱ

LS: Oh, I forgot that; I forgot all details. I see. But there must be, after all, some equivalent to that. Mr. Butterworth?

Student: Morano says that spontaneity—ⁱⁱⁱ

LS: Oh, spontaneity; that is not bad. That also plays a role in Dewey's book, *Human Nature and Conduct* [1922]. I don't know if spontaneity is the term he uses, but he makes the distinction between two things, custom or habit and spontaneity, I think. Yeah, that—that is not bad. So, what is here called "spontaneity," in its relation to the custom, corresponds to the distinction between the nature and the non-natural. But what is the difference here? In the Deweyan—this book I happen to know. What is the difference between Dewey's understanding of spontaneity and Rousseau's understanding of the natural? Well, it is, if I may use this ugly word, spontaneity is nature historically understood, meaning this: the spontaneity of the bushman, the spontaneity of an Englishman, the spontaneity of a Brazilian differ, because all spontaneity arises on the basis of a specific custom; and it is a kind of revolt against this *particular* culture.^{iv} This being the case the spontaneity is not universally the same, but depends on the custom which it opposes, do you see? But this is good. Now, Mr. Lane, you also wanted to say something.

Mr. Lane: I was going to bring up the same notion of Dewey.

LS: Huh?

Mr. Lane: I was going to bring up this same notion of Dewey.

LS: Yeah. Oh, I am sorry that I anticipated you. Was there any other point? Yes, I think this is—the question which one has to raise, of course, is this: whether the post-Rousseauan educationists—and by which I do not mean men like Pestalozzi^v and those who came almost immediately afterwards, but today—whether they still have—they surely no longer have the same theoretical basis as Rousseau has; I mean, this notion of natural man. And one would have to see whether this basis is as relatively clear as Rousseau's basis.

But it was interesting to see: you did not find any fundamental difficulty in Rousseau's position—any difficulty in Rousseau's position?

Student: No, except this . . . of the family

ⁱⁱ Strauss has referred to this book, by Ruth Benedict, in Session 5.

ⁱⁱⁱ I have been unable to track down the reference. Perhaps the student refers to Jacob Moreno (1889-1974), a psychotherapist and theorist of education in whose work spontaneity was a key term. [Ed.]

^{iv} John Dewey, *Human Nature and Conduct: An Introduction to Social Psychology* (New York: Carlton House, 1922), 58-83, 89-94.

^v Johann Pestalozzi, Swiss educational theorist and practitioner (1746-1827).

LS: Yes; but then, of course, you are confronted with the question, not all families are equally good for bringing up children, and what then you have to do, you would then have to have a notion of what is a good family—is this not clear?—for bringing up children; and do these educationalists which you have in mind have such a notion of the good family? I mean, this we have to have; otherwise it wouldn't be good, would it? I mean, the mere assertion that parents are better than tutors and so on does not help us, because not all parents are desirable from the point of view of bringing up children.

Regarding the point—which—that is the last point I am going to make—that Rousseau was the first to see the importance of puberty for education, I simply cannot believe that. Because, after all, at all times it could easily be seen; and I—if I remember well, there are many tribes [that practice] puberty rites and other things which are based on the fact that people are aware of it.³ I think there is only one difference: people spoke in former times about subjects of this nature with a certain reticence, do you see what I mean? And, you know then, Rousseau obviously did not have this reticence any more. I mean, when you read his *Confessions*—have you read his *Confessions*?—where he speaks about the most delicate things of his own life without any reticence—well, I am sure with quite a bit of reticence, but surely without any regard for what is proper to say. So, in other words, this, I believe, is not true, that the crucial importance of puberty was discovered by Rousseau. Good. But in the histories of education this is asserted, is it? I mean, I ask you; I have not read these histories.

Student: What I wanted to point out here was where in the discussion of this he says, “at this age the child's strength increases far more than the need—”^{vi}

LS: I see. You mean . . . developing the analysis . . .

Student: . . .

LS: Yes, but is there not in Plato's *Republic*—I admit not this sentence, but is there not in Plato's *Republic* something to the effect of the most difficult age—of the most difficult age, where children are especially in need of precautionary measures on the part of the [inaudible]? I believe so.^{vii} At any rate, it seems to me [that others spoke of this time of life prior to Rousseau]. But there is no doubt that Rousseau has spoken about these matters with a hitherto unheard-of lack of restraint. Of course, compared to what we observe today, this was still the rudimentary stage. Yes, someone—Mr. Lane.

Mr. Lane: . . . their procedures seem to have a unity which is noticeable but the principles from which they begin in the spectrum are radically different; and Rousseau sees a really insidious problem there, a conflict—an insoluble conflict, which Dewey seems to reject, and tries to acclimate his student to the environment as he moves along. But is this simply the outcome of a pragmatic—

^{vi} *E*, 426; 309.

^{vii} Strauss may have in mind the *Laws*, 835d. See Plato, *The Laws*, trans. Thomas L. Pangle (New York: Basic Books, 1980).

LS: Not quite. Not quite. That is not so, because [in Dewey] the nature and the natural life has lost completely the credibility it had for Rousseau. Differently stated, that man is a social being is admitted by Dewey as much as by Aristotle, however differently they might understand that. So, you know, this peculiar “individualism,” the extreme individualism of Rousseau, has been abandoned. You know, Dewey was practically a socialist, and even if he was not a socialist in particular,⁴ the whole Hegelian tradition, especially, and the utilitarian tradition excluded absolutely any notion of a natural man, the absolute rugged individualist, as it is intended here. So, it is not mere—by no means mere pragmatism.

Student: What is the connection⁵ [between] the [lack of] conflict and tension, and the presence of a revolutionary element in Dewey’s thought which somehow told him that society is changing somehow for the better, always changing . . .

LS: Yes, that is surely connected with it. Man was always from the very beginning a gregarious animal. And this development from, say, the earliest man up to now is, generally speaking, progressive of course; whereas for Rousseau, at least according to the thesis which we have read in the *Second Discourse*, there is an ascent up to—from the stupid animals to this—to the pastoral savages, and afterwards, going down, you remember. That is not the last word of Rousseau, but that he could still say—Dewey could never dream—would never have dreamt of saying that, with his notion of progress, of course, of social progress, and Dewey has never engaged in such a critique of science as Rousseau does. The method of intelligence—that is science—and the method of democracy are identical, according to⁶ Dewey; whereas Rousseau says they are incompatible. No, no, there are very great differences. I mean, it is good that we bring out these things lest we—seeing the continuity of a certain educationalist doctrine from Rousseau up to the present day—we do not see the great differences. Good.

Student: Would you develop the point you just made, that Rousseau said that the method of science and the method of—?

LS: Dewey! Dewey. It was a mere slip of the tongue.

Student: Yes. But you say Rousseau says that they’re incompatible. Would you develop that?

LS: Yes, sure, we have discussed the *First Discourse*, where he says that: the people must be kept away from the sciences altogether. Read the *First Discourse* and what he says; how Rome was such a wonderful republic, or Sparta, because and as long as they had nothing to do with science. and Athens was an inferior city because science played there such a role. So that, he goes through—

Student: I remember that.

LS: Well, if—let me see, what else can you read? Yes, the *First Discourse* is the most emphatic statement, but this returns time and again in the other writings, too.

Student: Small question. Is there anything in classical political thought, or classical writings, about this relationship between food and character? Because somehow . . .

LS: You mean, of these people in the Northeast—Scythians or whatever—

Student: I seem to remember something—

LS: —who eat only milk products and are so gentle? [Inaudible words about milk products.] What was their name?^{viii} Yes, but I would say, even in Aristotle that is taken for granted that these things do play a role; and Rousseau surely assumes that, both for nations and for individuals. He—Rousseau wanted to write a book, which he never completed, called *The Materialism of the Sage*, which dealt with such questions as the influence of food and other things of the same nature on the mind. . . .^{ix} And surely Montesquieu, in the *Spirit of the Laws*, says a lot about how fish, for example, affects attitudes, and he had a quite fantastic story about the Japanese and some other Eastern nations who, he believed, were (perhaps rightly, I do not know)⁷ eating very much more fish than the Western nations; and this determined their character, and so on.^x This was in a way in Weber, too. I would say, on the contrary, I think now people are rather more doubtful of the influence of merely natural influences on thought than they were in former times, say in the eighteenth century. That has something to do with the value question, you know. If there is a one-to-one relation between is and ought, then there cannot be this arbitrariness regarding values. In other words, social science relativism is a cross-breed between old materialism and old spiritualism. In a way it preserves—in a very funny way it preserves the notion of freedom—do you see that?—in this fact that there is no one-to-one relation between is and ought. Any “is”: two different tribes living under the same conditions . . . no natural . . . have different ought’s. Why? An inexplicable choice. That is—by the way, that is true, this influence of idealism on present-day social science relativism; that is parallel to the thing . . . in pure epistemology, where the precursor of present-day positivism was called “empirical criticism.” Have you ever heard of that? Ernst Mach was one of the most well-known historians and mechanists.^{xi} Now, this empirical criticism was savagely attacked by the late Lenin in a book of 600 pages^{xii}, which I have had the patience to read—and this phrase is not my own; it stems from Tocqueville^{xiii}—and in which he attacks them as critical spiritualists because they did not follow this well-known strict materialism as his own doctrine did. Now correspondingly, in the moral doctrine something similar has happened; the simple materialistic doctrine, I mean, for example . . . utilitarianism—crude utilitarianism, is of course rejected,⁸ because crude utilitarianism says these and these things are by nature good, and not to choose them is foolish. But then someone . . . Not to choose, say, mere life . . . is foolish. But now they have been told you may choose death as well as life; or you may choose anything. You know, this strange freedom which is here ascribed to man, they did not get⁹ . . . from their tradition: they take it from the other tradition. These things happen. And therefore—I do not know whether I made this as clear as I should have made it. I mean, in more technical terms—I mean more precise terms,

^{viii} Strauss may have in mind various groups described in Strabo’s *Geography*, Book 7, Chapter 3.

^{ix} Since there are recordings for this session, “inaudible words” are indicated by ellipses.

^x See Montesquieu, 1989, Book 23, Chapter 13, p. 435, where the issue is more biological than characterological—“the oily parts of the fish can supply the matter that serves for procreation.”

^{xi} Ernst Mach (1838-1916), a physicist (think mach speed), philosopher, and historian of science.

^{xii} *Materialism and Empirio-Criticism: Critical Comments on a Reactionary Philosophy* (1909).

^{xiii} The phrase “patience to read,” that is, which Tocqueville uses more than once in *The Ancien Regime and the French Revolution* (e.g. to refer to reading the minutes of the meetings of provincial assemblies).

the key individual for this present-day social science relativism is surely Max Weber, even if he had not originated it, but he made . . . social sciences. And I think this . . . came to the fore in this country only from the moment when Weber's things became known in this country, either through translations or through people who had studied with him in Germany. Now, what was Weber's starting point? He was originally an economist, and this meant some kind of utilitarianism, modified at any rate by the materialistic tradition. And then he was confronted especially by Nietzsche; and for Nietzsche the utilitarian and socialistic ideals,¹⁰ the highest standard of living—you know all these formulas—was described as the last man, i.e. the lowest stage which man can possibly reach, where everyone is well-fed, well-clothed, lodged, and so on, and has no longer any high aspirations, cannot have aspirations. That this criticism of these Baconian and ultimately utilitarian, and in a sense socialist, ideals was questioned radically, impressed very much Max Weber in particular. This questioning is the concrete meaning, you can almost say, of Weber's value-free social science. Social science cannot take a stand in the question between the—regarding the status of the last man: yes, it must be value-free. This does not exhaust the case of Max Weber by any means, but it is the most obvious thing. So, yes?

Student: How would you relate the case of Mill to your statement? Now, Mill, when you read *On Liberty*, he talks about the necessity of having freedom so that men can just sort of read about different ways of life and discuss them and rationally decide which way to live, just as if you were trying to decide—decided on a theory of life and then with just the snap of your fingers you changed character, or something.

LS: Well, in the first place, Mill never was a value-free social scientist: read his *Logic*. He was not a value free social scientist, number one. And number two, John Stuart Mill was already a cross-breed of his father and Bentham—the really tough utilitarians, who really thought only of the physical necessities of men above everything else—and certain French and, indirectly, German people who had somewhat loftier notions of the goal of society—you know, Saint Simon,^{xiv} and this kind of thing—and to say nothing of his god, meaning his wife, who, when you read what Mill says about her, that is the only proper description. I forgot her name.^{xv} But he really—he *worshipped* her, not in the sense in which other husbands are said to worship their wives; much more. Now—but I think Mill of course changed utilitarianism considerably, under the influence of non-utilitarian traditions, and this, by the way, was continued, and re-done, by Dewey.

Student: But I was thinking in particular—

LS: But there is no value-free social science in Mill, *nor* in Dewey.

Student: Right¹¹. But what I was thinking of, in your remarks of a few minutes ago, the whole question of whether a person is free to choose, let's say, his own values, his own way of life, or free to mold his own character, once, let's say, he has lived in adulthood. Now, I wasn't sure what group you were talking about when you were talking about Lenin's criticism.

^{xiv} Henri de Saint Simon (1760-1825), a social theorist associated with the development of socialism and positivism.

^{xv} Harriet Taylor.

LS: Oh, then I am sorry; that is always the trouble if one mentions too many names. That is terrible. Now, shall I restate it in a very simple way? In the present-day view there are two disciplines: one is called “epistemology” or maybe “logic” and the other is called “ethics.” This is clear to me.

Student: Logic or what?

LS: Or epistemology. Yeah, well—let us not make the fine distinction. And now, just as present-day logical positivism is not old-fashioned materialism—

Student: By whom do you—?

LS: Classic: Thomas Hobbes; modern times, but also . . . lesser people. But it is already—as is indicated by the very term “logical”—there is already all kind of Kant in that. Kant, have you heard of that?

Student: Yes. I don’t see in particular how Kant—

LS: Then I must simply say¹²; permit me to tell you. They don’t speak of Kant; this would embarrass them. They speak only of Hume; but when you read Hume and read them, you see there is a difference. May I make this formula [blackboard]: logical positivism minus Hume, something remains; and that is Kant. Is this helpful? Something similar here, if you take its equivalent, social science relativism—I call it SS; no, SSR: if you would now add “C”, then you would have Social Science Research Council, but that I will not do [statement interrupted several times by student laughter]. If you subtract from that, say utilitarianism, meaning this old element of it, you get something corresponding to Kant. You can even say Kant: a doctrine of freedom, of freedom not in the political sense, but a freedom of positing one’s values, which is something different from mere desiring, natural desiring. Good. I should not have said that; I mean, not because it is not defensible, but because it creates some confusion, unfortunately.

Now, let us now turn to our text, and Mr. Reinken, do you have it? On page 115, in the fourth paragraph.

Mr. Reinken: “If we had to wait till experience taught us to know and choose fit food for ourselves, we should die of hunger or poison; but a kindly providence which has made pleasure the means of—”

LS: Literally, “the supreme goodness.”

Mr. Reinken: “which has made pleasure the means of self-preservation to sentient beings teaches us through our palate what is suitable for our stomach. In a state of nature there is no better doctor than a man's own appetite, and no doubt in a state of nature man could find the most palatable food the most wholesome.”^{xvi}

^{xvi} E, 407; 294.

LS: Yeah. Now, do you see here? Rousseau is using again teleological terms; and we must see what he means by that. We know by nature what is by nature good for us. This is good; we know that by nature. He doesn't mean *we* know by nature. We must understand that. We are no longer natural men. If *we* would go out and eat anything which seems attractive to us, we would surely perish very soon, because we no longer have the proper instinct: we are no longer natural men. But a natural man knows by nature what is good for him by nature, and he knows it via pleasure. He is attracted—the pleasant for the natural man is that which is good for man as man, I mean healthy, in this particular case. But this is of no help for us, because we are no longer natural men, of course; and therefore we need medicine, and so on. In the sequel—in the next paragraph—he explains. Let us read—no, let us read the next paragraph.

Mr. Reinken: “Nor is this all. Our Maker provides, not only for those needs he has created, but for those we create for ourselves; and it is to keep the balance between our wants and our needs that he has caused our tastes to change and vary with our way of living. The further we are from a state of nature, the more we lose our natural tastes; or rather, habit becomes a second nature, and so completely replaces our real nature, that we have lost all knowledge of it.”^{xvii}

LS: Yes. Now you see,¹³ he has this great difficulty: how can he—there is a natural teleology, traced to God Himself here. But this is lost: we no longer are physically attracted by what is salutary. Now, the simple explanation would of course be we are corrupt; it is our fault. And that is the line which he takes sometimes, as we have seen in the *Second Discourse*.

Student:

LS: May I first finish this? The same providence of which he has spoken in the preceding paragraph¹⁴ [should arrange it so] that if we deviate from nature, if we create in ourselves desires which are not natural, the satisfaction of these desires is unpleasant. This one would follow, you know?¹⁵ But that is obviously not what Rousseau says. [Or so] that it is harmful, and again this is not what Rousseau says. What he says is meant to throw doubt on the teleology; these doubts which were expressed by his remarks about the superfluous faculties, by his assertion that the perfection of man beyond the stage of savages was bad for the species, which is incompatible with the teleology, because if the perfection of inlaid faculties is bad, then it cannot simply be a providential order. Is this clear? I mean, if the—if God has laid in us faculties the natural development of which is bad for us, then one cannot speak of the supreme goodness. Now, Mr.—

Student: Just a comment

LS: Ya.

Student: He raises the question of pleasure, that what is pleasant is good for us if we are natural

LS: As long as we are natural men.

^{xvii} *E*, 407-408; 294.

Student: Yes, natural men.

LS: Ya.

Student: Yes, in other words, I wondered if this food will not be . . . cooked—?

LS: Of course there would be no meat; that becomes clear. I mean, in other words, which plants of the various kinds of fruits or roots you would eat or not eat; you would—just as animals generally avoid things poisonous for them, men would do it instinctively.

Student: I mean, the notion of pleasure, the idea of making—pleasure would be [inaudible] the natural food,^{xviii} not something that has been spiced, or—

LS: That is completely out. But we are no longer able to distinguish between natural food not yet prepared, [or] to distinguish between what is poisonous or not. For that we need botany and chemistry and what-not, that is the point. We don't smell, as it were, whether something is poisonous or not. That is the difficulty.

Student: Even . . . taking food that is not poisonous, good food . . . he would still not like to see that improved in any way.

LS: We are not speaking of that now. We are now concerned only with this question whether man knows by nature what is good for him by nature; and Rousseau says he knows it as long as he is a natural man. But no one is any—not even the savages are any more natural men, and the question, the basic question here is the question of natural teleology, whether there is such a nature [that] guides us by itself to what is by nature good for us; that is the question. Now. Yes, Mr. Reinken.

Mr. Reinken: In the paragraph following, very interesting, he suddenly manages to shift the standard to self-sufficiency.

LS: Will you read it?

Mr. Reinken: “From this it follows that the most natural tastes should be the simplest, for those are more easily changed; but when they are sharpened and stimulated by our fancies they assume a form which is incapable of modification. The man who so far has not adapted himself to one country can learn the ways of any country whatsoever; but the man who has adopted the habits of one particular country can never shake them off.”^{xix}

LS: Yes. What does this mean? The question is still the same. What is the natural taste regarding food? A taste in no way affected by fancies, by opinions. The universal taste is for this reason infinitely malleable. You see, each animal species is directed to this or that kind of food. Man does not have such an instinct—that is the meaning of perfectibility—and therefore the more he preserves this infinite versatility and adaptability, the more he is natural. There is¹⁶—the

^{xviii} In other words, human beings would take pleasure in natural—i.e. unadulterated—food.

^{xix} *E*, 408; 294.

emphasis shifts from natural man in the sense of the stupid animal to man in his characteristic—his natural characteristic, which is, as Rousseau calls it, perfectibility, and which means also almost infinite malleability. Mr. Nicgorski.

Mr. Nicgorski: I was just going to say there is an interesting tension between the man and the citizen. He speaks of the country, the man who learns the ways of a particular country regarding food is not able to adjust to another form of—

LS: In other words, what is true of food is also true of prejudices.

Mr. Nicgorski: Yes.

LS: Yes, sure; but I am sure he thought of that. He wants to have the perfectly independent individual, in no way molded by local prejudices of any kind; and that applies, goes down even to food.

Student: Perhaps in the same connection [can be made with the fact] that Emile was taken on travels almost around the world just before he becomes a citizen.

LS: Ya, sure;¹⁷ but this is already a later thing, when he. . . Ya, but—he is meant to become a citizen, but he should be it, as it were, with a minimum of prejudices.

Student:

LS: Yes, sure. Well, that is even being done today, that people travel in order to counteract the local prejudices. Is this not true?

Student: When he talks about the sort of natural tastes for sweets, like cake and pastries and so on, in a way this is a superfluous faculty, or a superfluous desire. And yet, in another way, it is natural, and it seems as though this would be relevant here to the malleability, the infinite malleability; somehow this sort of taste is natural, and yet in another way it is superfluous and—

LS: Why is it superfluous? Do we not need sugar? Honestly—

Student: Well, he suggests that—

LS: And do not perhaps children need sugar to a higher degree than grown-ups? I do not know.

Student: Yes, but it is possible we can get what is naturally needed in terms of sugar through the natural sugar content of fruits and vegetables.

LS: Yes, but still, it can be illustrated also by later things; but what is true of candies would also be true of sweet fruits, relatively sweet fruits. In this respect, by the way, he follows only the classical tradition, by what is sweet. Sweet is that which is natural to our tongue; and the other things, like bitter, sour things, astringent things, they are against nature.^{xx} That you can read in

^{xx} Aristotle, *Nicomachean Ethics*, 1153a5-6.

Aristotle and quite a few other classical writers. And the test of it is, you have to get accustomed to it. I mean, once you are accustomed, people cannot stand any non-spiced food. But that requires a habituation. You do not have to be habituated to things which do not go against the grain of your tongue.

In the next paragraph—we cannot read the whole; I think we read the second half of it or less. “Finally,” he says, “the more simple our tastes are, the more universal they are.” Do you have it?

Mr. Reinken: “Indeed, the simpler our tastes are, the more general they are; made dishes are those most frequently disliked. Did you ever meet with any one who disliked bread or water? Here is the finger of nature, this then is our rule. Preserve the child's primitive tastes as long as possible; let his food be plain and simple, let strong flavors be unknown to his palate, and do not let his diet be too uniform.”^{xxi}

LS: It’s “let him not form an exclusive taste,” exclusive to this particular food of this particular country. Let us read the beginning of the next paragraph.

Mr. Reinken: “I am not asking, for the present, whether this way of living is healthier or no; that is not what I have in view. It is enough for me to know that my choice is more in accordance with nature, and that it can be more readily adapted to other conditions.”^{xxii}

LS: This is a very interesting remark. Rousseau is not concerned so much with the most healthy food—then he would have to call in physicians and so on—but what is necessary for man everywhere and always; more precisely, the natural is defined in terms of the maximum independence, the maximum self-sufficiency of the individual. This is the key consideration, not health. Health, of course, would also come in, but this is not here. That the overall consideration . . . and this is, the natural man is the man who has the maximum self-sufficiency, with an infinite adaptability. Yes?

Student: Didn’t you equate perfectibility and adaptability when they were brought up? And we found that our nature was in perfectibility?

LS: Yes, but you see—adaptability, you said. Yes, you can say that, because perfectibility creates a certain difficulty; because you cannot well speak of perfectibility if there is no perfection. And there is a certain difficulty in Rousseau in this respect, and therefore such terms like malleability and adaptability are in a way clearer in order to bring out what he has in mind. But this malleability or adaptability means, of course, the greatest freedom. If he is put down in the Sahara, or near the North Pole, he still can find his way. If you bring an eighteenth century French peasant in either of these two cases, he will perish, because he knows nothing but the French way of life, and if he doesn’t have his *déjeuner* at the right time and so, he will get into very great troubles

Student: I hesitate to bring this up, but about two years ago I read an extract of an experiment which is interesting in connection with this reading. They took babies and put in front of them a

^{xxi} E, 408; 294.

^{xxii} E, 408; 295.

variety of foods . . . different kinds of ingredients, some meat, some vegetables, fruit, and all sorts of things. And it turned out that the babies themselves would secure a right proportion of food, to take a certain amount of meat, of vegetables, fruit products and all this sort of thing, without—almost picking the model balanced diet.^{xxiii}

LS: Also qualitatively? Not only quantitatively?

Student: Qualitatively and quantitatively.

LS: I don't know of that. Was this a sufficiently controlled experiment? [Laughter]

Student: I read the extract, and I don't know all the details—

LS: I do not know; I cannot say anything. I am impressed, that is all I can say. [Laughter]

Student: . . . find that five-year-olds tended to poison themselves. [Laughter]

LS: And how old were these? You also know of the experiment?

Student: They were very tiny babies. An older child surely would eat candy.

Student: So he is correct in Rousseau's terms.

LS: Yes. Sure, that is what is interesting. I am amazed.

In the next paragraph—that is *really* interesting—we skip the rest of this paragraph—in the next paragraph he makes a distinction . . . It is too long to read. Perhaps we read the third sentence, “The activity of this sense—”

Mr. Reinken: “is wholly physical and material; of all the senses, it alone makes no appeal to the imagination, or at least, imagination plays a smaller part in its sensations; while imitation and imagination often bring morality into the impressions of the other senses.”^{xxiv}

LS: He is speaking of the sense of touch—taste . . . You see, the physical and material is here distinguished from that which has to do with imagination, imitation,¹⁸ [morality]. The physical and material is natural. This distinction in this form you find in Hobbes's *Leviathan*, chapter 27, when he speaks of corporeal hurt—you know, you are shot, or so—and fantastical hurt.^{xxv} Fantastical hurt is any hurting of the vanity; and this is the same distinction underlying here, and as we have seen, very important for Rousseau. Now we turn to—where is that?—page 119, second paragraph. This whole passage. You see there is a whole passage which goes up to page 120. Perhaps we read first page 120, paragraph 3.

^{xxiii} C.M. Davis, *Self-selection of Diet in Newly Weaned Infants: an Experimental Study*, *Journal of Diseases of Children* 36:4 (1928): 651-679.

^{xxiv} *E*, 409; 295.

^{xxv} Hobbes, 1994, Chapter 27, para. 20, pp. 196-97.

Mr. Reinken: “Although this quotation is irrelevant, I cannot resist the temptation to transcribe it, and I think few of my readers will resent it.”^{xxvi}

LS: Yes, now, this is very long. In this edition here it is three pages: that is a very long irrelevancy inserted. The quotation is from Plutarch, as Rousseau says, and the writing is called “Of the Eating of the Flesh,” “*De Esu Carnium*,” from one, the beginning of that writing. Now, why did he do that? Well, it is an attack—you have read it already, of course?—an attack on meat-eating, on the basis of classical—certain classical doctrines, pre-Socratic philosophers, Pythagoreans, Empedocles, and so on. We cannot possibly read the whole thing, but to see that this is not merely done by Rousseau because it is so beautifully phrased, but it has another meaning, we read one particular passage which I indicate immediately. I would like to mention only one point for those who happen to be particularly interested here in this work: compared with the original, it is a very free translation. I wonder whether—Rousseau didn’t know Greek, as far as I know. But I am sure it was translated into Latin and also into French. One would have to look into the translations available at that time, and I would not be surprised if Rousseau did not even embellish the translations available to him. At any rate, since he incorporates it and, as it were, appropriates it, it throws light on his own view regarding a matter infinitely more important than the issue of vegetarianism. Now, after this long introduction, let us read page 119, paragraph 2.

Mr. Reinken: “‘Mortals, beloved of the gods—’”

LS: No, we must read before that: after the Homer quote, the verses.

Mr. Reinken: “Thus must he have felt the first time he did despite to nature and made this horrible meal; the first time he hungered for the living creature, and desired to feed upon the beast which was still grazing; when he bade them slay, dismember, and cut up the sheep which licked his hands. It is those who began these cruel feasts, not those who abandon them, who should cause surprise, and there were excuses for those primitive men, excuses which we have not, and the absence of such excuses multiplies our barbarity a hundred-fold.”

LS: You see, I mean this is something absolutely awful, to kill an animal for eating it; but the men who introduced it first had some excuses which we lack. We are infinitely more barbaric when we go to a restaurant and eat some wonderfully prepared meat dish than these savages were who ate the, say, leg of a lamb which was not even cooked and which was still bloody. Now, go on.

Mr. Reinken: “‘Mortals, beloved of the gods,’ says this primitive man—”

LS: “‘would these first men tell us.’”

Mr. Reinken: “‘compare our times with yours; see how happy you are, and how wretched were we. The earth, newly formed, the air heavy with moisture, were not yet subjected to the rule of the seasons. Three-fourths of the surface of the globe was flooded by the ever-shifting channels of rivers uncertain of their course, and covered with pools, lakes, and bottomless morasses. The

^{xxvi} E, 414; 299.

remaining quarter was covered with woods and barren forests. The earth yielded no good fruit, we had no instruments of tillage, we did not even know the use of them, and the time of harvest never came for those who had sown nothing. Thus hunger was always in our midst. In winter, mosses and the bark of trees were our common food. A few green roots of dogs-bit or heather were a feast, and when men found beech-mast, nuts, or acorns, they danced for joy round the beech or oak, to the sound of some rude song, while they called the earth their mother and their nurse. This was their only festival, their only sport; all the rest of man's life was spent in sorrow, pain, and hunger.”

LS:

Mr. Reinken: ““At length, when the bare and naked earth no longer offered us any food, we were compelled in self-defense to outrage nature, and to feed upon our companions in distress, rather than perish with them.””^{xxvii}

LS: That is all we need. Does this strike you, this passage? I would like to make another point: shortly before the quotation, he speaks in the middle of that preceding paragraph, “All savages are cruel.”^{xxviii} Now, I repeat to you the key passages. These first men say to us, “You, present-day men, are happy; and how miserable were we. We were always hungry; all our life was pain and misery. We were compelled to eat the companions of our misery, i.e. the other beasts who also were hungry; and you, of course are no longer under such a compulsion.” What observation arises necessarily when one reads these two, three pages in Rousseau?

Student: That agriculture and society are necessary.

LS: This is an understatement. Surely, but how would—I mean this is an understatement because¹⁹ it doesn’t correspond to the gravity of the issue.

²⁰**Student:** Man must be sinful?

LS: It flatly contradicts the whole teaching of the *Second Discourse*. Men were happy at the beginning. Now we are told that *we* are happy. The first men were savages and cruel, lived in misery, and they were compelled to become cannibals, almost the same as cannibals. I mean, through the mouth of Plutarch, Rousseau retracts here the ostensible teaching of the *Second Discourse*. He reveals a full agreement with Hobbes and Locke regarding man in the state of nature. How was it in Hobbes? “Brutish, nasty, and short.” Yes? Now—

Student: You might say, though, that if he said that we’re more barbarous,²¹ although they were physically more miserable, they were morally more happy.

LS: Yes, you can put it this way; but still he said—he had spoken of that, of the happy phase, without making any remarks about the constant hunger in which they were; [there is] no allusion to that in these passages of the *Second Discourse*. And I believe he did this advisedly, that he

^{xxvii} E, 412-13; 298.

^{xxviii} E, 411; 197.

entrusted the retraction to another character, the character being Plutarch. We have seen that this teaching of the *Second Discourse* doesn't hold water when one tries to understand the *Second Discourse* more fully, but officially it is *the* teaching of the book. You see in the—well you can put it this way: in the *Second Discourse*, he—this teaching there about the wonderful life of pastoral men, the savages, is based also on an ancient writer, whom he does not quote, but scholars have seen that, and it is perfectly correct; and that is Lucretius, Lucretius being a kind of non-quotable author, you know, being an Epicurean and so [on]. Plutarch was quotable. But . . . he puts the Plutarchan image of early man against the Lucretian image. And that is his view. I have discussed this at some length when we discussed the *Second Discourse*, why the view of this passage, that this was *the* happy age of man, the pastoral savages, and everything else later was and *will* be inferior, cannot be regarded as Rousseau's serious and final view of the matter. Mr. Butterworth.

Mr. Butterworth: Could you be more explicit on your idea that—you said that this was different from the original. For instance, does he change anything in the voice of the person speaking in this—?

LS: No, this *prosopoeia* of the first man is there. This is in Plutarch also.

Mr. Butterworth: The third person singular?

LS: No, I mean but one of these early men addresses these present-day meat-eaters is the same thing. No, I mean, I haven't made—I simply didn't have the time, but one should do that, and in order to make a distinction between what is Rousseau's own doing, one has to know the translations which he used.

Mr. Butterworth: One reason for that being important is, isn't it true that all the translations of Plutarch for Rousseau were sixteenth-century French?^{xxix}

LS: That I do not know; I simply do not know. I do not know whether the first editor of Plutarch—was it not Xylander?^{xxx}—whether he did not translate him into Latin, I simply do not know, but that is easy to find out, and one only . . . Well, of course, a Chicago library would not be good enough for that, they wouldn't have the old French translations. But that can be found easily. Perhaps someone did it in these "*Annales de Jean-Jacques Rousseau*" in Geneva, I have not looked it up. But surely, regardless of what that is, Rousseau accepts this here. The main point I want to make in a way is a purely methodical one: when Rousseau says it is a mere digression, that the passage was just so wonderful he could not help quoting it, this is not quite so. Mr. Mueller?

Mr. Mueller: He does say "²²[we were forced] to outrage nature" which we were compelled to. Does he maintain we cannot expect this force; does he maintain the natural goodness?

^{xxix} Rousseau read Amyot's sixteenth century translation as a child—he specifically mentions it in one version of the *Confessions* (Rousseau, 1995, 600 n. 28). There were eighteenth century versions of Plutarch available, but Rousseau follows the Amyot closely here.

^{xxx} Wilhelm Xylander, a sixteenth century classical scholar who produced the first complete Latin translation of Plutarch's *Moralia*.

LS: Yeah, in a way, yes. Because if you are compelled to do that for sheer self-preservation, you are not blameworthy—if you mean that. But still, when you speak, however, of the state of nature—yes, that is the great ambiguity of “man is by nature good.” What does this mean? That is once—the picture as Locke describes it at the beginning of the *Second Treatise*—you know, people living peaceably in a golden age—that is one thing. Now, but—in other words, there is no competition for food. And then, however, finally “man is by nature good” comes to mean natural man hurts other people, other human beings only—but necessarily—if the alternative is *his* insufficient self-preservation. You know this formulation: pursue your own good with the least evil to anybody else.^{xxx} A man who does that is good. I mean, the concept of natural goodness in Rousseau is a very long story. I just read a passage in the *Confessions* in which he speaks of—

END OF TAPE SIDE ONE

LS: [in progress] —he was about to deceive his friend regarding this friend’s mistress^{xxxii}—I mean, it was not his wife, but he was in this way very delicate; he regarded a mistress as good as a wife—and he calls it a criminal action. And yet he says he was perfectly good in attempting this—he was not successful—in attempting this criminal action because it was sheer natural sentiment, you know; he had to This is also natural goodness; you must understand it properly. You cannot—in other words, to speak of morality when Rousseau speaks of natural goodness is utterly misleading. It means only no intention to hurt. Mr. Seltzer.

Mr. Seltzer: Isn’t there part of the *Second Discourse* in which man, still in the state of nature, is yet reduced to this condition because of overpopulation and hunger?^{xxxiii}

LS: Yes, the overpopulation, I believe, leads to inventions; this point is mentioned, that they are compelled to invent in order to survive. They are compelled to till the soil. But I don’t believe that there is anything—²³the vicious character of the state of nature [is not stated]. I mean, the war of everybody against everybody, comes in at the end, only after property had been introduced. That is an entirety—I mean, that they lived, were almost always in hunger and in misery is not stated. The terrible state of nature of which he does speak in the *Second Discourse* is the consequence of the introduction of private property, not of natural scarcity. But this is, by the way, the key issue in all these discussions, and, one can say, the change which Locke effected; because in Rousseau’s—in Hobbes’s presentation, the state of nature is so bad because men are so nasty, concerned with superiority. And Locke’s change is, really, they were not so nasty; they were so poor, and the poverty made them nasty, i.e. it was an innocent nastiness, induced by poverty and the like. And that is also taken over by Montesquieu, this side, and eventually comes to Rousseau. So, I mean, there is no question—only to repeat this point I have made more than once—that Rousseau did not ever mean if we only could return to the state of savagery,²⁴ [that] that would be the best thing which—²⁵he never meant this. There is a certain—I mean the state of nature as, say for example, described in the *Second Discourse* is a kind of

^{xxx} *Second Treatise*, Chapter II, S 4.

^{xxxii} Strauss refers to Rousseau’s passion for Sophie d’Houdetot, the mistress of his friend Saint-Lambert. He gives an account of their near-affair in the *Confessions* (Rousseau, 1995, 368-402).

^{xxxiii} *SD*, 165; 44.

symbol indicating something, and this must be interpreted to make perfectly—to make clear what it means in precise terms. You want to say something?

Student: He does speak, in the *Second Discourse*, of the obsessive cruelty in the savage state, and he seems to attribute it there to the beginnings of pride.^{xxxiv}

LS: Exactly; not to natural necessity.

Student: Yes; and I am wondering now about here on page 118: he very simply and straightforwardly says, “All savages are cruel, and it is not their customs that tend in this direction; their cruelty is the result of their food.”^{xxxv}

LS: Yes, but again, why do they eat their food? Why do they eat that food? They have to—he says it—they have to. This is the overall “philosophy of history” which Rousseau and people like him opposed to the Biblical view. In the Biblical view, man was created perfect, under a condition—he was in no way compelled—in no way compelled—to become bad. He fell; and the fall leads to the other evils, also to some physical evils. For these people like Hobbes and Rousseau and Locke, man’s original status is very imperfect. Men are quasi-compelled to be nasty; compelled. And you see, when you say it is due to pride, you know—the savages, men had to become social, by earthquakes and I don’t know what—but then when they become social they become morally bad, concerned with superiority, inferiority, pride. And then they are really vicious. But here a different, a much more materialistic explanation is suggested: poverty, extreme need, is the cause—the ultimate cause of all moral evils. But complications arise; later on, habits of nastiness arise, and then even if people are no longer compelled to be nasty, the habit compels them. You see, the—but the kind of thing which is . . . crucial for modern criminology: what is the cause of crime? Can it free—can it be evil or viciousness? Out of the question; [crime] must be explained by environment and other things; that is it. So, that is a very powerful thing of which—to which we are the heirs. Here, only on a larger scale—not just to explain juvenile delinquency and these things—the whole history of mankind; and [there is] an absolutely miserable condition at the beginning, where there was not even a possibility of distinguishing between right and wrong, noble and base. And this arose quite slowly and quite unintentionally; people become wealthier as the culture came: property rights. It became necessary to defend against foreign hordes, so the virtue of courage became esteemed; and gradually,²⁶ the higher life of man gradually developed non-teleologically. This is this view which is underlying much of present-day thought. And then the following implication, up to the present day: this unsupervised process—you know what I mean by that: not planned in any way²⁷—is . . . a progressive process, but necessarily an imperfectly progressive process, because of its accidental non-supervised character. But at a certain moment, a man, or some men become aware of this character²⁸; and at this moment man can plan his progress. Men can do consciously, consistently, what hitherto has only happened. That is what the eighteenth century stands for, and Rousseau, too, among them. And therefore his *Social Contract*. This shows—well, there were approximations to it, to this republic. And therefore he can use past examples; whether it is Geneva or Rome or Sparta, it doesn’t make any difference. But these were all imperfect, because that merely grew, and wasn’t made consciously. And when people became aware of that—I

^{xxxiv} *SD*, 170; 48.

^{xxxv} *E*, 411; 197.

mean, became aware of the defects of this enlightenment scheme (and this is more or less the greatest effect of the French Revolution: the greatest effect of the French Revolution was that people came to doubt whether these fabricated societies are truly superior to the other ones)—then there arose this notion—then the notion of history as we know it arose. Because what was—I mean here you have the fabricated constitution, the state of France—²⁹retrospectively it had to be applied to the American Constitution as well, but surely primarily the French constitution. Constitutions cannot be made; they must grow, i.e. constitutions or other social institutions are now understood as being natural in the way in which plants and animals are natural—but this is, of course, not the same naturalness, obviously, as that of dogs and cats. And when this . . . was more fully interpreted, then the notion of history in our sense came out, which is not older than the reaction to the French Revolution. I believe one can prove that even, *texte à la main*. Good. . . . Did I answer your question, by the way?

Student: Yes.

LS: Sometimes—

Student: When you made your remarks about criminology, I just recalled that earlier in the *Emile*, telling Emile that this angry man was sick^{xxxvi} was not altogether deception on Rousseau's part towards Emile, but something—

LS: Yes, sure, but here again we must be careful. No. By the way, there is a modern novel—you see, my time span is a bit longer: it is really 60 or 70 years old—by a British utopianist, I forgot the name, who wrote *The Way of All Flesh*.

Student: Butler.^{xxxvii}

LS: Butler . . . this is based—have you read the other one?—but this is based on the principle that all sickness—men are not responsible for their illnesses. But their moral defects, they are just illnesses, and they have to be treated by your corner psychiatrists. [Inaudible]. That is naturally amusingly developed there. But here, we must be careful for closer analysis, because the view that such a thing like anger is an illness is of course much older. Have you ever heard of that?

Student: I think the whole notion—the whole classical notion of a balancing of the soul

LS: But very simply—I mean, excuse me if I may . . . when you read Cicero's *Tusculan Disputations* about, especially, the Stoic part³⁰: the passions are diseases of the soul.^{xxxviii} So, in other words, this is very old, but what is [new here]? The difference between the Stoics and these moderns was in the way of treating [the passions]. The Stoic treatment is reason. When you read [Seneca's]^{xxxix} large book on anger³¹ [it] gives you all kinds of treatment, namely, say to yourself how foolish it is to be angry. In other words, rational exhortation, not psychoanalysis, you know?

^{xxxvi} *E*, 327-28; 229-30.

^{xxxvii} Samuel Butler (1835-1902). *The Way of All Flesh* was published in 1903.

^{xxxviii} *Tusculan Disputations*, IV, 10-13.

^{xxxix} The transcriber leaves a space here—Seneca's "On Anger" is not "large" but otherwise fits.

Student: The Stoics would attribute responsibility to

LS: Absolutely, surely. But now it is an inner thing, disease—that is the difference—mechanically caused, fundamentally; mechanically caused, just as the gallbladder. And just as you call in your gall-bladder specialist if you have gallstones, you call in your passion specialist if you suffer from passion. Good.

Student: Plutarch must also have been in the Democritean tradition: the earth newly formed—

LS: Oh, yes, I see. That is good, what you say. You mean that the visible universe has come into being. Yes, that is true. But Plutarch was, I think, in a general way—I don't know him well enough—belongs much more to the Platonic tradition, generally speaking. But you are quite right: this statement is—reminds much more of Lucretius or something of this kind than of Plato or Aristotle, that is quite true. Thank you; I overlooked that.

Now we have to consider a few other passages. If you will read on page 122, bottom.

Mr. Reinken:

LS: No

Mr. Reinken: “The life of finite creatures is so poor and narrow that the mere sight of what is arouses no emotion.”

LS: Yes, go on.

Mr. Reinken: It is fancy which decks reality—”

LS: “chimeras,” literally translated.

Mr. Reinken: Chimeras?

LS: Yes.

Mr. Reinken: “and if imagination does not lend its charm to that which touches our senses, our barren pleasure is confined to the senses alone, while the heart remains cold.”^{xl}

LS: Ya. Let us stop here. So, if one may use our present-day language, reality as reality leaves us cold. It is value-free. Only through chimeras, through imagination, i.e. through our desires, does it take on the moving qualities which it has: the sun rising, or whatever it may be. Yeah. There are many more passages. Page 124, the end of the first paragraph.

Mr. Reinken: “It is his friend, his comrade, who meets him; when he sees me he knows very well that he will not be long without amusement; we are never dependent on each other—”^{xli}

^{xl} E, 418; 302.

LS: This is a key sentence: never dependence. Never dependence, even in the case of friendship; the independent individual. And at the end of the following paragraph. Only the end: "One does not have to tell him, raise your head."

Mr. Reinken: "—there is no need to say, 'Hold your head up,' he will neither hang his head for shame or fear."^{xlii}

LS: So, neither shame nor fear ever enters here, except the fear of bodily dangers, of course. And there is another point of the same character in page 125 at the center of the first paragraph: "he does not follow formula." Well, read the whole paragraph.

Mr. Reinken: "He does not know the meaning of habit, routine, and custom: what he did yesterday has no control over what he is doing to-day; he follows no rule, submits to no authority, copies no pattern, and only acts or speaks as he pleases."^{xliii}

LS: Yes, I think that is clear. All the same line. Now, what is the moral significance of that? Read on the same page, the second paragraph.

Mr. Reinken: "You will find he has a few moral ideas concerning his present state and none concerning manhood—"

LS: Well, "none concerning the relative state of men," namely, higher, lower, better, worse, and so on. Go on. Yes?

Mr. Reinken: "what use could he make of them, for the child is not, as yet, an active member of society. Speak to him of freedom, of property, or even of what is usually done; he may understand you so far; he knows why his things are his own, and why other things are not his, and nothing more. Speak to him of duty or obedience; he will not know what you are talking about; bid him do something and he will pay no attention; but say to him, "If you will give me this pleasure, I will repay it when required," and he will hasten to give you satisfaction, for he asks nothing better than to extend his domain, to acquire rights over you, which will, he knows, be respected."^{xliv}

LS: Yes, that is quite interesting, that the notion of empire, as he calls it, did enter his head. It is inevitable. But surely the morality of the child is strictly selfish. I mean, there is no question of mere giving for giving's sake; it is based on the calculation of reciprocity. Now, in the next paragraph, it seems to be qualified. If you'll read—read the beginning of the next paragraph, the first few sentences.

Mr. Reinken: "For his own part, should he need help, he will ask it readily of the first person he meets. He will ask it of a king as readily as of his servant; all men are equals in his eyes. From

^{xli} E, 419; 303.

^{xlii} E, 420; 303.

^{xliii} E, 421; 304.

^{xliv} E, 421; 304-5.

his way of asking you will see he knows you owe him nothing, that he is asking a favor. He knows too that humanity moves you to grant this favor.”^{xliv}

LS: Yes. What does this mean in this stage, that humanity induces him to do that favor? Can this be more than the awareness of a general need of help, I mean i.e. calculating? Can it be more? I ask the question. I read to you one more passage in the second book and then we turn to the third book. That is on page 126, in the third paragraph, towards the end of it.

Mr. Reinken: “He is made to lead, to rule his fellows; talent and experience take the place of right and authority.”

LS: So, in other words, in spite of the strictly asocial education, he has acquired qualities of the utmost social importance; and therefore he can later on become a social or a political being. Go and read the end of this paragraph.

Mr. Reinken: “In any garb, under any name, he will still be first; everywhere he will rule the rest, they will always feel his superiority, he will be master without knowing it, and they will serve him unawares.”^{xlvi}

LS: So, in other words, he is the natural ruler, as the ancients would call it; and how is this compatible with his education? He was educated only as an asocial being—not anti-social; asocial—and yet he will be the natural ruler. Yes?

Student: Well, he is the only free man.

LS: Exactly. That is it. By being the individual, *the* individual in the most radical sense, fully independent of others, of prejudices, and of authority³²—this very fact makes him at least potentially the ruler. So now, we turn to the third book.

Student: A question.

LS: Yes, Mr. Butterworth?

Mr. Butterworth: Do you mean to say he would be the ruler, or would you say, using Rousseau’s terminology, better call him the legislator in this case? I am thinking in terms of—

LS: Yes, that is one thing. We use ruler now in the widest sense, where it may [mean anything] up from the dog-catcher to the legislator; in the widest sense. I mean, a dog-catcher would be too bad, because he doesn’t give commands to any human beings, I believe. He may, by the way; there may be cases.

[Inaudible exchange]

LS: There may be cases.

^{xliv} E, 421-22; 305.

^{xlvi} E, 423; 306.

Student: The reason I said this was because of the distance he has from any entrance into society itself at this point.

LS: Yes, sure, that's true; that comes later. But he has—he is still asocial, but in his asociality he has acquired a faculty, a quality of the greatest social importance: leadership, natural leadership. And the link was exactly as Mr. Mueller said, that he is an individual as no one else is an individual. Now we must turn to the third book. Mr. Lane?

Mr. Lane: How would this natural leader fit—would there still not be a need for the philosopher who is going to instruct the masses?

LS: We don't know yet. We don't know yet; we must see how this works. But I think I must tell you that he—how did he become this man?

Mr. Lane: I would guess through the instruction of the philosopher.

LS: I see. Well, so they are still needed. I mean there is—I mean, no Emile without Rousseau, just as there is no free—no market and free competition without Adam Smith—never forget that: these things are not *simply* natural. I mean, they need some human intervention, if only to prevent intervention. Mr. Morrison

Mr. Morrison: There is another thing which has bothered me all the way through, in a way. How [do] you reconcile the emphasis on the every stage having its perfection kind of way of looking at things—and all his great words: the child may be dead tomorrow, and so let him live today—with what is quite obvious from the examples—a passage like this brings it out—that in fact there is a teleology; the child becomes a man.

LS: Yes, a kind [of teleology]. But you know as well as I do how Rousseau solved that. In each—for example, let us take the case of the child which you have described: he became this paragon because he was never told anything which he did not fully understand, which was not clear and distinct knowledge for him. By regarding *his* age as self-sufficient³³, we prepared him best for manhood. If he had regarded the childhood as preparatory for manhood, we would have ruined him for manhood. Does this not make sense? So that, in other words, the self-sufficiency of each age and a certain hierarchy of the ages are reconciled by this formula. Man, at least the individual, reaches his highest stage—that Rousseau doesn't doubt—when he is adult. To that extent childhood is preparatory. But if childhood is regarded in the educational process as preparatory, then you make a slave out of him, a slave of convention, prejudices. If you want to have him on the highest level as a free man, you must treat him when he is a child so that on the childish level he is as self-sufficient as a man should be on the level of a man. Does this not make sense? In other words, the child in his narrow circle [blackboard] is as perfectly a knower, an individual possessing clear and distinct knowledge of all that falls within that circle, as the greatest philosopher would be in the full universe, the true universe. That I think he made very clear.

Student: But it makes it very hard in some of these things that he says . . . in this educational policy because he is planning ahead in a way which seems—

LS: Yes, this is this point that Rousseau—that is the same story we had with Adam Smith: that if Rousseau were not, or someone like Rousseau were not present, surely some fool would interfere and would stunt him. I mean, that is undeniable: the children need guidance. The guidance can be unintelligent, and it can be intelligent. Now, what Rousseau says is that practically all the education which men have practiced hitherto was unintelligent; and this is intelligent. It is still guidance, but a guidance which becomes barely visible as guidance to the child. I mean, we have spoken of the element of artifact, and even of swindle in the . . . teacher, that we have shown; but the formal consistency on this basis, I think, cannot be denied. You want to say something?

Student: I was wondering: would you say that for Rousseau this is just a tactic . . . leads the child to manhood, or that he really means that you shouldn't even, that [it] shouldn't be your intention to lead the child to manhood, but to—

LS: Yes, no; both. By leading—but you cannot properly lead him to manhood unless you take him as seriously as possible as a child and therefore do not tell him anything which he cannot understand. And he should³⁴ discover as much for himself as possible, and not be told, because in this way he acquires the habit of relying on what other people say. But he should not acquire that habit. I think in this point he is consistent. Whether it is workable, feasible, and whether it . . . of other things is of course another matter.

Now, we must now turn to the third book, which is the central book, the work consisting of five books. Now, I will do something which Rousseau strictly forbids one to do: use authority, and just handing something down which I know—I believe to know the fact and I cannot demonstrate, which only has appeared to me on many occasions; that in writers of this kind the central, the thing in the center, is always most important, both in big and in large things. I mean, in big things, the whole book; in large things, simple enumerations of *n* items—the central one seems to be important. This you don't have to believe—I mean, you *should* not believe that³⁵ [because it comes from] me, but I simply, I hope I have the right as an old man to say something which I have often observed.

³⁶**Student:** May I ask a question?

LS: Yes.

Student: I feel in terms of simple justice, I raised this question regarding the center of the *Second Discourse* in an earlier meeting; and at that point you suggested that you just didn't know, and that—

LS: How far this went? Yes, that has to be investigated in every point. I mean, in Rousseau, let me put it this way: in Rousseau I have never³⁷ [had] this experience, never; only this time in reading the *Emile*, and I am going to—may I prove it? Look. Well, let us see first on page 129, paragraph 2, second half: this age which he is discussing now in the third book.

Mr. Reinken: “This interval in which the strength of the individual is in excess of his wants is, as I have said, relatively though not absolutely the time of greatest strength. It is the most precious time in his life; it comes but once; it is very short, all too short, as you will see when you consider the importance of using it aright.”^{xlvi}

LS: Yes, you see, it is—I mean it deals with the most—this is the third book, the central book—deals with the most precious time of life, you know, with something which is intrinsically the most important. It is also the third time, stage of childhood, as he says in the second paragraph of the third book. But let us see; we cannot possibly read everything. Let us read on page 129, paragraph 4, what he must teach. In other words, the main point, the intellectual development of the child becomes now much more important than in the earlier stage—that is the point—and so he must learn; he must learn to know. But what should he know? Answer: what we are concerned with is not that he knows anything or everything, but only what is useful.³⁸ He should learn only useful things, and more specifically, things the usefulness of which *he sees*. So, if you tell him it will be useful to you when you are ambassador—later on when he comes to a noble family—that is of no use. Now, read the next paragraph, 129, paragraph 5. “From this small number.”

Mr. Reinken: “We are now confined to a circle, small indeed compared—“

LS: No, before.

Mr. Reinken: “From this small stock we must also deduct those truths which require a full grown mind for their understanding, those which suppose a knowledge of man's relations to his fellow-men—a knowledge which no child can acquire; these things, although in themselves true—”

LS: No, no, that not—that is the third item.^{xlvi} In other words, first of all he shouldn't learn things which are useless, that is the first. Now, we take away those verities which require an adult understanding. Then we take away those verities which presuppose a knowledge of the relations of men. For example, higher mathematics would belong to the first; and as you know, a higher mathematician may be blissfully unaware of human relations and understanding. Have you heard of that, Mr. Reinken?

Mr. Reinken: Yes.

LS: Good. And the third class: things which, while true in themselves, dispose an inexperienced soul to think wrongly on other subjects. I would call this the “dangerous truth,” the last kind—truth, but dangerous, especially for a child. This is confirmed by the end of the last, of the following paragraph: “Remember, remember unceasingly that ignorance has never done any evil, that error alone is disastrous, and that one does not mistake by that which one does not know, but

^{xlvi} *E*, 427; 310.

^{xlvi} In other words, Rousseau means to name a third kind of truth, other than those that demand a fully formed mind and those that require an adult knowledge of man's relations—namely those that, though true, may lead the child into errors about other things. Foxley's translation suggests that “things, although in themselves true” refers to the first two kinds of truth I just named.

only by that which one believes to know.”^{xlix} Now, he develops this more generally: [one should teach] only natural knowledge, i.e. knowledge not based on authority, of what our nature requires to know.

134, paragraph 4, we should read. Only a few more pages and then we will be through.

Mr. Reinken: “Remember—”

LS: “Always.”³⁹ “Always remember,” he says.

Mr. Reinken: “Always remember that this is the essential point in my method—”

LS: “in my *instruction*.” . . .

Mr. Reinken: “Do not teach the child many things, but never to let him form inaccurate or confused ideas.”

LS: Literally, “never to let enter into his brain except accurate and clear ideas.” That is almost the same as the clear and distinct ideas of Descartes. Yes?

Mr. Reinken: “I care not if he knows nothing provided he is not mistaken, and I only acquaint him with truths to guard him against the errors he might put in their place. Reason and judgment come slowly, prejudices flock to us in crowds, and from these he must be protected.”^l

LS: Yes, that is really the formula for the whole book: a child without prejudices, because the adult education of prejudices from grown-ups comes much too late. Yes. Page 135, paragraph 5.

Mr. Reinken: “Again I must enter into minute and detailed explanations. I hear my readers murmur, but I am prepared to meet their disapproval; I will not sacrifice the most important part of this book to your impatience.”^{li}

LS: “the most useful part of this book.” So, do you doubt that the third part is the most useful part?

Student: There is one question that I would have, and that is that there is another center, and that is the center of the book speaking literally, the center of the whole work—

LS: Ya, ya. Sure.

Student: —namely the Profession of Faith of the Savoyard Vicar.

LS: Is this—well, you know more than I do; have you really made a proper study?

^{xlix} E, 428; 311.

^l E, 435; 316.

^{li} E, 437; 318.

Student: I haven't calculated it.

LS: Well, we can do it; I have it here. How many pages? 444? 222; almost you are right. Shortly after that literal center, it begins, yes. And this is already the preparation for it. That is true: another center. Well, many things have more than one center; for example, if you divide a book into chapters, the central chapter is not the central line or so. Yeah, good. But this is nevertheless—he says of this point, not of the Savoyard Vicar, that this is the most useful part of the book; and of course it would be necessary to understand that. Let us see. On the same—the next paragraph, I think. At the end of the next paragraph, when he tells the story: “One day we go to the fair.”

Mr. Reinken: You don't want the note?

LS: Not the note.

Mr. Reinken: “We go to the fair and a conjuror has a wax duck floating in a basin of water, and he makes it follow a bit of bread. We are greatly surprised, but we do not call him a wizard, never having heard of such persons.”^{lii}

LS: You see, that is it; that is an example. Such things, such superstitious notions as a sorcerer do not exist. That is important for Rousseau; and one has to read this whole story of that sorcerer to understand. We see what Rousseau has in mind is two-fold: first, no such notions as that of sorcerers; secondly, no arousing of any vanity, because—the thing which the so-called sorcerer did was something with a magnet, and these simple country people had no notion, and they were simply full of admiration that he had an artificial duck who followed a piece of bread wherever he went. There was a magnet within that duck. And then Emile, with the help of his tutor, figured it out, and then they go the next day there and do the same thing. And of course [it is] a terrific success, that this boy too can do it, and he is full of vanity and pride. And then his pride will be crushed by some other experiment which he makes: the next day the duck doesn't follow, because⁴⁰ [the sorcerer] had made some other arrangement—I forgot now what that was; it is not important—and so this modification of pride is, of course, as important a lesson as the lesson regarding the non-existence of sorcery. This is a very important point why the third book is so important. Now, let me see: yes, this prevention of pride, that is fully developed later; we cannot [go into it]. It is amusing to read, and the whole thing was, of course, staged between the tutor and the sorcerer, that he should first have this short-lived triumph and then this terrific deflation which is meant to cure him of vanity or pride for the rest of his days.

Student: The last part of the story, the sense of shame

LS: Yes. Now, two more passages regarding—which throw light on this education without prejudices. On page 141, the third paragraph.

Mr. Reinken: “Let the child do nothing because he is told; nothing is good for him but what he recognises as good.”

^{lii} *E*, 437; 318.

LS: Literally, “what he feels to be such.”

Mr. Reinken: “When you are always urging him beyond his present understanding, you think you are exercising a foresight which you really lack. To provide him with useless tools which he may never require, you deprive him of man's most useful tool—common-sense. You would have him docile as a child; he will be a credulous dupe when he grows up. You are always saying, ‘What I ask is for your good, though you cannot understand it. What does it matter to me whether you do it or not; my efforts are entirely on your account.’”

LS: In other words, when you are accustomed to that as a child, you will do it as a grown-up man. And then he will not be a free man. Continue, please.

Mr. Reinken: “All these fine speeches with which you hope to make him good, are preparing the way, so that the visionary, the tempter, the charlatan, the rascal, and every kind of fool may catch him in his snare or draw him into his folly.”^{liii}

LS: Yes; I think it is absolutely obvious what he has in mind. Page 142, paragraph 2.

Mr. Reinken: “‘What is the use of that?’ In future this is the sacred formula, the formula by which he and I test every action of our lives.”

LS: So you see, perfect rationality. He is perfectly conscious why he learns it, why it is important to him to know it, and why this particular thing is as it is. Yes. At the end of this paragraph also.

Mr. Reinken: “A pupil, who has been really taught only to want to know what is useful, questions like Socrates; he never asks a question without a reason for it, for he knows he will be required to give his reason before he gets an answer.”^{liv}

LS: In other words, the childish habit to ask you infinitely these questions is stopped by Rousseau in this way: why should you know; why is it good for you to know it? Then, of course, the child has no answer, naturally. And this is perhaps not a bad thing; to stop this kind of question. The last passage we will read is on page 142, fourth paragraph.

Mr. Reinken: “Perhaps this is the greatest of the tutor's difficulties. If you merely try to put the child off when he asks a question, and if you give him a single reason he is not able to understand, if he finds that you reason according to your own ideas, not his, he will think what you tell him is good for you but not for him; you will lose his confidence and all your labor is thrown away. But what master will stop short and confess his faults to his pupil? We all make it a rule never to own to the faults we really have. Now I would make it a rule to admit even the faults I have not, if I could not make my reasons clear to him; as my conduct will always be intelligible to him, he will never—”

^{liii} *E*, 444-45; 324.

^{liv} *E*, 446; 325.

LS: “will always be clear in his mind.” I mean, not only will other things which he uses, tools, be lucid to him [but also] even the only other man with whom he has contact is as clear to him as a mountain stream. Nothing mysterious; and so he will have a perfectly enlightened child.

Mr. Reinken: “he will never doubt me and I shall gain more credit by confessing my imaginary faults than those who conceal their real defects.”^{lv}

LS: I believe, in this part of the book, he does not—does he not yet speak about the education about how children are born? No, that comes next time, so we shouldn’t—we wait until we come to that. He gives an answer of a French mother which is in a way quite correct, i.e. he explains the facts in a way a child can understand them.^{lvi} It is not a lie; I mean, there is nothing of the stork. This impressed me very much, because I was always wondering how he can take this hurdle. But this he owes to a French woman, that was not his invention. Now, is there any other point you would like to take up? Because otherwise we won’t read any more. Mr. Johnson and

Mr. Johnson: I was just wondering in that story, presumably the mention of the third partner, namely, the charlatan who comes back—. First of all after Emile has failed in the second task, and he is mortified; then the story just doesn’t end there, but he comes back.

LS: No, no. Yes, go on. What is the message?

Student: The sense of shame for having almost taken away his bread and butter from him.

LS: Yes, that is true; that should also be mentioned. Mr. Butterworth.

Mr. Butterworth: It was somewhat on the same line, but—once again this issue of finding the central point of that story. If [the order of the points] is that first of all, teaching Emile that there should be no superstition, and then finally to keep him from being vain, proud, and then the third one which is the fact that the charlatan comes back and teaches Emile to always go to his master and keep asking his master questions. The third thing is . . . very important, but the middle point is the one that we keep finding in Rousseau, this question of pride and vanity, and to stress that it should always be taken away from the child whenever it starts to rise.

LS: Sure; that is surely true. And you—

Student: In the *Letters to the People of Poland*,^{lvii} Rousseau says that they could repel the Russian aggression and be free when they are true to their national culture, and he makes a generalization of this. Does this mean that the national culture is something perfect, or something—I mean, does he equate this with something natural?

LS: No, no. Utterly unnatural. But this is exactly the contradiction of which he spoke at the beginning: man—citizen. Man, natural; citizen, arbitrary. And in the *Government of Poland*

^{lv} *E*, 446-47; 325-26.

^{lvi} *E*, 499; 369.

^{lvii} *Considerations on the Government of Poland*.

occurs the strongest statement of Rousseau on this subject: the more unnatural, the better. An exclusive, xenophobic, national spirit is infinitely preferable to the cosmopolitanism at that time rampant in the upper strata of society. So Rousseau is—there is no question, whatever some people may say—Rousseau is one of the fathers of nineteenth century and twentieth century nationalism; no question. But Rousseau did not understand the nation as a natural organism; that came only with the nineteenth century. It was prepared by Rousseau, but it is not in him. In him it is, man has to live in society, i.e. political societies. And this political society must have a character of its own.^{lviii} Patriotism reaches its greatest height if it is dedication to specific values, not to universal values—then you can say that has nothing to do with American . . . Italian . . . any other national unit, and how this has come into being, this nation, by conquest, by heritage from princes, you know, that doesn't make any difference. The main point is—preferably it should be, of course, a democratic republic; but this was the most powerful part of nineteenth and twentieth century nationalism, of course, that it is democratic and not in favor of a national nobility or a national monarchy. Sure; I think one can say that.

I wouldn't know of any other one who is so important for preparing the nationalistic doctrine—and also fever, one must say—of the nineteenth and twentieth century; surely. But that is not humanity. That is not humanity. Humanity is something different, a preserve of a small group of people. You see, I mean, for Rousseau, the political life and social life is not the highest for man, but it is a preserve of a very small minority which—and this, of course, is also preserved in present-day thought, but in a completely diluted manner, when people speak of intellectuals. You know, many of these very liberal intellectuals have at the same time a very great pride on being intellectuals. Have you seen . . . I think you can observe it everywhere. Now, and this means, of course, they are in no way folksy people, although in one way they are very democratic. But they are not folksy, but intellectual, which you can also see from the language which they use: that is not a popular language. I mean, they may study what they call pop cult, popular culture—or did I coin that? I don't know, but at any rate it is perfectly fitting for it [student laughter]—but they don't do it, pop cult; they do it in a way that the people studied do not recognize themselves in these descriptions, that I think one—I don't think Marshal Dillon would ever understand [student laughter] when he would—you know who Marshal Dillon is? I thought so. [Student laughter]. In Dodge City. But Rousseau, of course, would not think that these intellectuals are what he meant. He meant such beings with intellect and heart like he⁴¹ believed [himself] to possess. That is a different sort; whereas Rousseau's doctrine is incompatible with eating the cake and having it, that is clear: either/or. And the present-day view is one which is satisfactory because it combines the possession of the cake with having eaten it; and that is always a great recommendation.

Good. Now, next time . . . who will read the paper . . .

END OF LECTURE.

¹ Deleted “that.”

² Deleted “I mean.”

³ Deleted “And I am sure if you. . . .”

^{lviii} Rousseau, 2005, 172, 174-75.

⁴ Deleted “but.”

⁵ Deleted “with.”

⁶ Deleted “Rousseau—to”

⁷ Deleted “were.”

⁸ Deleted “you know.”

⁹ Deleted “from their.”

¹⁰ Deleted “yeah.”

¹¹ Deleted “yeah.”

¹² Deleted “I tell you.”

¹³ Deleted “now.”

¹⁴ Deleted “arranges.”

¹⁵ Deleted “Would follow.”

¹⁶ Deleted “you know.”

¹⁷ Deleted “yeah.”

¹⁸ Deleted “moral.”

¹⁹ Deleted “it doesn’t live up to the.”

²⁰ Deleted “LS: Huh? Student: Man must be sinful?”

²¹ Deleted “now, you might say that.”

²² Deleted “a force.”

²³ Deleted “that.”

²⁴ Deleted “and.”

²⁵ Deleted “that.”

²⁶ Deleted “you know.”

²⁷ Deleted “the unsupervised process.”

²⁸ Deleted “become aware of it.”

²⁹ Deleted “but”

³⁰ Deleted “that part.”

³¹ Deleted “which.”

³² Deleted “to.”

³³ Deleted “by regarding his age as self-sufficient.”

³⁴ Deleted “find.”

³⁵ Deleted “to.”

³⁶ Deleted “Student: May I ask a question? LS: Huh?”

³⁷ Deleted “made.”

³⁸ Deleted “yeah?”

³⁹ Deleted “yeah?”

⁴⁰ Deleted “he.”

⁴¹ Moved “himself.”

Session 9

[In progress] **LS:** —at this stage, when he is about fifteen, he is a completely pre-moral being; and, of course, also a pre-believing being—[that does] nowhere enter. There is one particular point which is of some accidental interest: does any one of you remember what the French convention decided about the education of the son of Louis XVI after the execution?

Student: He has some sort of trade.

LS: I believe carpenter, but I am not so sure.ⁱ We could ask Mr. Gottschalk,ⁱⁱ perhaps. It could be. I believe it is so. That's Rousseau. You see, [inaudible] strange book, and in the same connection he refers also to other royalty, who is unable to take care of itself.ⁱⁱⁱ Did this ring any bell in reading it, of a man who had three kingdoms and had to beg at the other courts because he hadn't learned any trade?^{iv} That was James II, obviously. But I believe he could have done quite well as a captain, or in the navy in any country; I have been told he was very good at that. [Inaudible]. At any rate, the republican notions of Rousseau affect this of course at every point.

Now, let us proceed in a natural order. We begin at page 143, top. Here is only a very general statement which illustrates the whole approach of Rousseau, remarks to which effect have occurred before, but we might read that.

Mr. Reinken: "I do not like verbal explanations. Young people pay little heed to them, nor do they remember them. Things! Things! I cannot repeat it too often. We lay too much stress upon words; we teachers babble, and our scholars follow our example."^v

LS: Yes; this is only another sign of what he means by natural education: the *things* are by nature; the words are of conventional origin, are artifacts of some kind. Now, this theme goes, of course, through in various ways—only clear and distinct knowledge, we have seen this before on many occasions. And also this other point on page 146, the sixth paragraph. I read this single sentence: "Never comparisons with other children, no rivals, no competitors, even at running, as soon as he begins to reason: I would prefer a hundred times that he doesn't learn what he would not learn except by means of jealousy or vanity."^{vi}

These two items go through the whole book, as we have now seen: only clear and distinct knowledge, such clear and distinct knowledge which a child can have; and no engagement of a

ⁱ A cobbler was appointed as the Dauphin's tutor.

ⁱⁱ Not a student in the class but Louis Gottschalk, a professor of history at the University of Chicago, an expert on the French Revolution.

ⁱⁱⁱ *E*, 468; 344.

^{iv} Foxley's translation has the "three kingdoms" language. She, like Strauss, is presumably using the Garnier edition of *Emile*—for an explanation, see *E*, 1440, note a; 749, n. 15. The reference is to the grandson of James II.

^v *E*, 447; 326.

^{vi} *E*, 453-54; 331.

spirit of comparison, glory, vanity, and so on. Now, in the immediate sequel he speaks of the best treatise of natural education, meaning by that *Robinson Crusoe*. I think we should read that: page 147, in the sixth paragraph. I mean, why *Robinson Crusoe* is so important.

Mr. Reinken: “Robinson Crusoe on his island, deprived of the help of his fellowmen, without the means of carrying on the various arts, yet finding food, preserving his life, and procuring a certain amount of comfort; this is the thing to interest people of all ages, and it can be made attractive to children in all sorts of ways. We shall thus make a reality of that desert island which formerly served as an illustration. The condition, I confess, is not that of a social being, nor is it in all probability Emile’s own condition—”

LS: Because in all probability, Emile will have to live with other human beings. Yes.

Mr. Reinken: “but he should use it as a standard of comparison for all other conditions. The surest way to raise him above prejudice and to base his judgments on the true relations of things, is to put him in the place of a solitary man, and to judge all things as they would be judged by such a man in relation to their own utility.”^{vii}

LS: “at *his* own utility.” This is, then, the reason why *Robinson Crusoe* is the best treatise of natural education: the absolutely isolated individual. But it is clear, this is surely the ideal; we must judge with a view to it all his relations, even if he lives in society: [he should be] concerned only with his utility, with his comfortable self-preservation, we can say. You know, self-preservation, bare minimum, just to live; but he needn’t be, he can have some comfort, as we see that Robinson Crusoe is thinking of making his life in his palace or his castle as comfortable as possible. In other words, a reasonable comfort is, of course, necessary. [He is] in full use of his reason; that is understood, because Robinson Crusoe is a grown-up man, naturally. [He is] the perfect individual, in contradistinction to the species, the people, or society.

Now, natural is here, it seems, used in a teleological sense. That is the natural man as he is in his perfection—and we have seen other such occurrences—and we must try to explain how is this possible, given the questionable character of teleology in Rousseau’s thought. Now, after Rousseau, and on the basis of Rousseau, Kant understood what was hitherto called the natural law as the laws of freedom, in contradistinction to natural laws. Natural laws are, so to speak, the Newtonian laws, or the law of supply and demand, this kind of law. But what was hitherto also understood by natural laws, namely, the law pointing to man’s perfection, was now no longer called natural, but rational laws of reason or the laws of freedom. Now, this was decisively prepared by Rousseau, and it throws light backward on Rousseau, for the following reason. Man’s nature, as Rousseau describes it, especially in the *Second Discourse*, does not give any indication as to man’s perfection. It is meant to be self-sufficient and not to point beyond itself. You remember, accidents had to come to drive man out of the state of nature. Natural man as Rousseau describes him in the *Second Discourse* is pre-social, pre-rational, and, strictly speaking, pre-human. He has only the capacity of becoming human given certain pressures from the outside, but in himself he is entirely pre-human. That, it seems, cannot give man any guidance: how can you take, what can we learn of how to live, from a being hardly distinguishable from an orangutan? The comparison stems from Rousseau.

^{vii} *E*, 455; 332.

There is something entirely different which Rousseau develops most clearly in the *Social Contract*. How can we get a law on the basis of such an “is”, meaning a completely pre-moral or amoral “is”? Now, Rousseau describes this in the *Social Contract* roughly in these terms: by nature we are concerned with our self-preservation, with our well-being, narrowly conceived—not with anything like duty. How do we arrive at a distinction between a merely selfish will and a common will, or a good will? And Rousseau says, we don’t have to make any study of human nature for that purpose—he doesn’t say that, but that is implied. There is one way of finding out a rule, and that is the generalization of our wills, and in a strictly political context. You go to the assembly, to the town meeting, with the firm intention to pay no taxes any more; and you state there ought to be a law, abolition of all taxes; and the moment you state that, or perhaps even before, you become aware of the fact, if it is a law, it will be, of course applied equally to all, and then you will suffer from that law. The generalization of your particular will compels you to replace yourself, Mr. XY, by *anybody*, and by this act you transcend yourself. So, the mere necessity of legislation, merely the formal character of a law, that it applies not only to you, but to all, makes you rational. Now, this is, of course, a difficulty even on the political plane, as you could see when you read the *Social Contract*, but there is something to that; it is not an entirely irrational thought.

Starting from this, Kant found a solution to the moral problem which he believed makes recourse to nature henceforth absolutely unnecessary; and that is, of course, no longer the law, the political law in this particular state—this would not be a truly universal law, law binding men as men. But you have to start, to begin with, on a higher level of abstraction. Now, if we think of our actions, we may observe that underlying all particular decisions which we make there are some principles, traditionally called maxims. For instance, I may observe that I act on the maxim, I want to get what I wish by hook and by crook—and quite a few people probably live on that maxim; others by other ones. So in order to distinguish between bad and good maxims, I have to test it, and the test is very simple: I must universalize it; in other words, replace myself by anybody and put it this way, that my maxim should be able to be understood as a law binding all rational beings anywhere. So, every maxim which survives this test is good, or at least is blameless; and every maxim which does not survive this test is false. This is the famous principle of Kant’s ethics, which he called a formal ethics because a mere form of rationality, i.e. universality, is a sufficient test of goodness. This grew out of Rousseau, and throws, as I said before, retroactively light *on* Rousseau; because in the case of Rousseau, natural law in the traditional sense had already become highly problematic, because the natural man, the nature of man,¹ no longer² [had] any specifically human traits: it was no longer a social being; it was no longer a rational being.

This is only a first indication of how one could try, and to some extent Rousseau himself tried, to overcome the difficulty of which he had become aware at the first. Later on we will see more about that. We first have to consider more fully the variety of meanings which the term “natural” has in Rousseau. We come to that now. But, Mr. Boyan.

Stephen Boyan: I am sorry, I didn’t get the answer to the question that you posed in Rousseau’s terms, how we get the ought on the basis of—

LS: One can only say this: the question, I mean . . . today, as it is generally presented, on the basis of Kant of course, is, there is a sphere of the is, and there is no pointer whatever from the “is” to an “ought.” Have you heard that view, which is today the prevailing view? You can say that is³ partly prepared by Hume, but much more prepared by Kant. And the traditional view, say, most clearly expressed in Aristotle, is that there is such a pointer, because everything points towards its end, towards its completion, towards its perfection; so the question of this distinction of is and ought didn’t exist. Then there was a great break, connected primarily with Hobbes—I will take this up later—and Hobbes still thought it is possible, while abandoning teleology —[LS goes to the Blackboard] this is Hobbes—to have a natural law. Rousseau, too, believed that, but in Rousseau the whole thing becomes very problematic, because of his deviation from Hobbes. Hobbes’s natural man was still a rational being, although not a social being. Rousseau’s natural man is not social, and also not rational. How can such a subhuman being give any guidance to man—that is the difficulty—of how *we* should live. Do you see that? Now, on this basis, one can rightly state there is no pointer from the “is” to the “ought.” So, we must have an entire . . . a principle of the ought which has no basis whatever in the is. That is what Kant was trying to do. But as I said,⁴ when Rousseau speaks of the generalization of the wills taking place in political legislation, and Kant speaks of the universalization of maxims taking place in moral choice, there is a connection. They are not identical, because Rousseau is speaking of political law and Kant is speaking of moral law; they are not identical, but there is a connection there. The mere form, called by Rousseau generalization and by Kant universalization, is sufficient for making a distinction.

So now, let us proceed and first get a better notion of the variety of meanings of Rousseau; let us turn to page 148, the third paragraph.

Mr. Reinken: “The exercise of the natural arts, which may be carried on by one man alone, leads on to the industrial arts which call for the cooperation of many hands. The former may be carried on by hermits, by savages, but the others can only arise in a society, and they make society necessary.”

LS: Let us stop here for one moment. The natural arts are those which the natural man, the isolated man, can practice. The industrial arts are not natural, because they are based on division of labor, as we see in the sequel.

Mr. Reinken: “So long as only bodily needs are recognized man is self-sufficing; with superfluity comes the need for division and distribution of labor, for though one man working alone can earn a man's living, one hundred men working together can earn the living of two hundred. As soon as some men are idle, others must work to make up for their idleness.”^{viii}

LS: So, natural is, then, that for which one does not need others, what does not require division of labor. In other words, when I satisfy my needs without the help of any other human being, this is natural; whereas if I, by working with others,⁵ satisfy also the need of others, and not my whole being is involved, because I specialize necessarily on the basis of division of labor, then it is not natural. Now one sees here both the closeness to Marx and the difference from Marx. What was Marx’s solution to this problem? Because that is exactly Marx’s problem: Man has

^{viii} E, 456; 333.

ceased to be natural by virtue of the division of labor—only Marx does no longer say “ceased to be natural,” because nature has no longer the character of a norm for Marx—man has ceased to be whole, entire; [he] has become fragmentized. And the only way to overcome it is not a return to the savages, but to go on, to go in in the process of division of labor until a point is reached where communism becomes the only possibility of going on with society: the complete socialization of man, i.e. the complete suppression of the natural in Rousseau’s sense, through overcoming the division of labor. So you have again a whole man, a man not fragmentized, not specialized, but within society and through society; and a man whose faculties are fully developed, whereas the natural man in Rousseau’s sense is admittedly a man whose faculties are still completely undeveloped. Let us read also the next paragraph.

Mr. Reinken: “Your main object should be to keep out of your scholar’s way all idea of such social relations as he cannot understand, but when the development of knowledge compels you to show him the mutual dependence of mankind, instead of showing him its moral side, turn all his attention at first towards industry and the mechanical arts which make men useful to one another.”^{ix}

LS: That is all we need. We see a connection with Marx here: the primary things are not the social relations proper, but, as one could almost say, the modes of production. The way which man satisfies his needs by productive activity, that makes him what he is. But this only in passing.

Here natural needs are also spoken of in the sequel as opposed to the imaginary needs. Social; imaginary; opinion; this is all the distinctive mark of the non-natural. We must always keep this in mind. There is one more passage, on page 149, in the fifth paragraph. A little bit on in this paragraph: “In order to be wise.”

Mr. Reinken: “To be wise we must discern between good and evil. How can your child know men, when he can neither judge of their judgments nor unravel their mistakes? It is a misfortune to know what they think, without knowing whether their thoughts are true or false. First teach him things as they really are, afterwards you will teach him how they appear to us. He will then be able to make a comparison between popular ideas and truth—”

LS: No: “between opinion and truth.”

Mr. Reinken: “between opinion and truth, and be able to rise above the vulgar crowd; for you are unaware of the prejudices you adopt, and you do not lead a nation when you are like it. But if you begin to teach the opinions of other people—”

LS: No. That is very interesting: he calls it public opinion here. Public opinion originally had a derogatory sense, never let us forget that. Public opinion is wrong opinion, foolish opinion; and it is an interesting story, when public opinion began to take on a positive meaning—and this is, I believe partly true in Rousseau. In Rousseau you find both usages, the positive and the negative meaning. And then, of course, it became simply positive in the later development, with the later development of democracy. But originally it meant simply foolish opinion. I remember an

^{ix} *E*, 456; 333.

occurrence of the term in Thomas More's *Utopia*—I think a single occurrence—where it has simply a negative meaning.^x Yes?

Mr. Reinken: “But if you begin to instruct him in public opinion before you teach him how to judge of their worth—”

LS: No, “of its worth.” In other words, first you have to teach him how to judge of public opinion, and then it is no danger to him if he is exposed to it. But if he is exposed to public opinion without having acquired the capacity to judge of it, then he will be subjugated by it. Go on.

Mr. Reinken: “[of one thing, you may be sure,] your pupil will adopt those opinions whatever you may do, and you will not succeed in uprooting them. I am therefore convinced that to make a young man judge rightly, you must form his judgment rather than teach him your own.”^{xi}

LS: As he continues—we cannot read that—in the next paragraph, he speaks of the fact [that] he cannot yet know the social laws, but he knows the chains of necessity. He is almost exclusively a physical being—a physical being, not yet a moral being—and he appreciates all bodies of nature and all works of men by their sensible rapports, sensibly perceivable rapports, with his utility, his security, his preservation, his well-being. That is this stage.

In the next paragraph he speaks in passing,⁶ he says, as it were, that Emile is not a vulgar man, [a] vulgar child; but this does not contradict the fact that Emile *is* an average man. He is an average man, but not educated in the average manner. To that extent Emile is not a vulgar man. Now, let us turn to page 151, at the end of the first paragraph.

Mr. Reinken: “I do not ask whether industry is really greater and more deserving of reward when engaged in the delicate arts which give the final shape to these materials, than in the labor which first gave them to man's use; but this I say, that in everything the art which is most generally useful and necessary, is undoubtedly that which most deserves esteem, and that art which requires the least help from others, is more worthy of honor than those which are dependent on other arts, since it is freer and more nearly independent. These are the true laws of value in the arts; all others are arbitrary and dependent on popular prejudice.”^{xii}

LS: “Opinion.” So, in other words, the so-called lowest arts are the highest, because they are the freest and least dependent on other arts. This is, of course, directly opposite to the Aristotelian view where the highest arts are the most directing arts: those arts, or [the] art, which should direct all other arts. Here, of course, the connection with Rousseau's democratic tendencies is⁷ quite visible.

Student: Could you apply this to something like an art where you put everything on the same level as the arts that Aristotle often talks about, like horsemanship, or even medicine? Would you

^x See Thomas More, *Utopia*, ed. David Harris Sacks, trans. Ralph Robinson (Boston, Bedford/St. Martin's, 1999), 201.

^{xi} *E*, 458; 334-35.

^{xii} *E*, 459-60; 336.

be able to push Rousseau to the point of saying that the groom, the art of the groom is more important?

LS: Yes, I thought of that same example. Let me simply restate the point.⁸ [Take] the highest art—let us call it the legislative art—and then subordinate to it is the political art in the narrower sense—the art of the statesman who—well, you can make it clear: the legislative art is that art which enabled the Founding Fathers to establish the Constitution, an art not required of the President of the U.S., because he works within that framework; he is not supposed to establish it—so the art of the statesman is lower [than the art of the legislator]; and then there is an art still lower, and that is the military art, the art of the general, because he has to take orders from the President. And then you have to say the art of the captain of cavalry is inferior to the general's art because he has to take orders from the general who synchronizes the activity of infantry, cavalry, elephants, artillery, or what other military subjects there may be. And then we come down to the art of the bridle-maker, because he is told by the horseman what kind of bridle is good for his activity. Simple hierarchy of arts; you can apply it to any other thing, I think. But why is this nevertheless not applicable to Rousseau here? Because the art of the bridle-maker is surely an art dependent on many others, for example on the material out of which the bridle is made, you know, and these arts. So what Rousseau has in mind are arts which are autonomous, completely autonomous; and the art of the bridle-maker is obviously not autonomous. But the simplest case, the tiller of the soil—he doesn't need anyone to guide him; he knows what to sow, and when to sow, and when to harvest, and so on.

Student: Yes, but can you make this transition? It would be very helpful to be able to make this transition.

LS: All right; how would Aristotle argue against this case of Rousseau?⁹ Is the art of the tiller of the soil wholly independent of the existence . . . I mean, you mustn't take the present-day industrial farmer who is dependent on chemistry and what-not, but take in older times when the farmer knew everything he had to know from what he had seen his father before him do. What would be Aristotle's objection? Well, very simply, how can the farmer be sure that he will harvest what he sows unless there is government? The enemy may come, and all kinds of other things. So, in other words, the tilling of the soil requires political life if it is to be sure; and therefore . . . there is in one way surely the dependence of the ruler on the farmer, because if the farmers wouldn't produce grain and what-not, they would have nothing to eat. But this relationship . . . [LS writes on the blackboard]. There is such a relationship and such a relationship; but this doesn't do away with the fact that *this* is higher, more intellectual. The farmer's art is not an intellectual art. I mean, the minimum of—

Student: Then this gets into the — for Rousseau it would be the embarrassing position of [inaudible] that Aristotle takes account of the natures that are linked with each of these arts.

LS: Yes, and this leads to the great difficulty: you see [blackboard], if you have this order, that means, in other words, that what should rule, politically expressed, is wisdom; and wisdom has a natural right to rule, and that is, of course, incompatible with the principle of democracy as ordinarily understood. And therefore Rousseau must take the other way around. Or simply said, politically, what . . . in Aristotle's analysis and the facts were not changed by Rousseau's time

which are the classes in control in a democracy, according to Aristotle? There is this general formula.

Student: The middle class.

LS: No, no.

Student: The poor.

LS: The poor. But what does “the poor” mean? That doesn’t mean beggars, paupers.

Student: The many.

LS: Yes, that is the same; because, it so happens, the many who, as Aristotle has so wisely said—

Student: Would this be the commercial interests?

LS: No: the farmers and artisans—not the gentlemen farmers, but the peasants and the artisans. And they are the preferred classes in Rousseau, naturally. I mean, that’s not the whole story, but up to a certain point, because Rousseau has a democratic intuition. But this brings us up to the true difficulty: if you look at the education of Emile, this is obviously not the education which a poor farmer’s, or a carpenter’s boy can ever afford; obviously. More generally stated, how is the individualism of Rousseau compatible with his democracy—a question which we have touched upon before—because democracy surely means the supremacy of the communal will, at least in Rousseau’s opinion. Now, what do we know about that? How is individualism. . . some people—not everyone, that is clear, but some individuals—perfect their reason fully. That is one thing; and the other thing is society. Let us never forget what Rousseau says about the fundamental cleavage between the perfection of society and the perfection of the individuals. Have you forgotten that? I mean, you have many precedents for forgetting it, because it is generally done in the literature on Rousseau, but we shouldn’t forget it. How are they related in Rousseau?

Student: I think of the *First Discourse*.

LS: Wherever you want; anywhere.

Student: The fact that all men should not have knowledge—

LS: And *could* not have; certainly could not have.

Student: But in order, then, for society

LS: Mr. Seltzer?

Mr. Seltzer: I think it has to do with this passage in the *First Discourse* about Bacon and Descartes, in other words a few rare individuals who don’t need any guidance; and I think this

comes out, too, in the *Confessions* where he says that he, Rousseau, at seven years old was a man, was thinking like a man, and not like a child.^{xiii}

LS: Yes, that is true; that is quite true. But in order to understand that, we must look at how democracy is ordinarily understood—I mean, not by Rousseau. Liberal democracy as ordinarily understood means, I think, both the highest development of the individual, of *all* individuals; *and* rule by the collective consisting of these individuals. Self-government of each over his sphere, and self-government of the individuals united of their common affairs. This is not Rousseau's view of the situation.

Student: Would you say in liberal democracy the answer is to give a private sphere in which the individuals develop and a public sphere in which the many rule; and Rousseau's view is to make, in that quote we read earlier, is to make the individual dependent on law as a general will?

LS: No, let us leave it at that general formula which you simply stated: the private sphere. What is the status of the private sphere in Rousseau?

Student: It's simply abolished in the *Social Contract*.

LS: Yes and no. In the theoretical formula it is *completely* abolished, because the social contract means the surrender of the individual, with all his forces and everything belonging to him, to society; there is no private sphere. The private sphere which exists, exists only by virtue of an act of the common will, of the general will. So, in other words, the citizen body assembled establishes by law the sanctity of a private sphere which the general will defines, and whenever the general will feels there is something wrong with this previous definition, it can alter the definition. Is this clear? So, Rousseau wants to have a private sphere; but this private sphere is absolutely dependent on the will of the sovereign—that is the point—whereas in the more common notion of liberal democracy, that is denied. And therefore Rousseau has to. . . . The problem of Rousseau arises on this ground. Since there is such a necessity of a general will which is all-competent and truly sovereign, the question arises, is there not something in man which transcends the general will. And Rousseau says, yes, in the case of some few individuals; not in the case of all individuals. Do you see that? That is where the difficulty arises.

Student: Isn't it stated that what is sufficient, as far as ruling goes, among the people who rule, is that their sentiment carries them to the point of doing what they should do?

LS: Then there would be no difficulty, would there?

Student: Except for the fact . . . when the sentiment isn't fouled up.

LS: Yes, but then there would be no problem, there would be no need for civil society. If all men would . . .

Student: But the point is that their sentiment is corrupted and it has to be enlightened.

^{xiii} *FD*, 29; 21; *Confessions*, 7-8; 52. Rousseau emphasizes the precocity of his feelings more than the precocity of his reason in these passages.

LS: Yes, but since it is everywhere corrupted in Rousseau's sense,¹⁰ everywhere sentiment is insufficient. In other words, there is not such a kind of—as Aristotle seems to sketch it at the beginning of the *Politics*—a kind of organic development from the family towards larger associations, finally the *polis*. For Rousseau, at a certain point a genuine break takes place. That is what he means by the denaturalization—*dénaturer*—which is necessary.^{xiv} We will come to that later. Mr. Mueller.

Mr. Mueller: What is the nature of this private sphere

LS: That men should have property, private property. And this means, of course, also clearly that there must naturally be freedom of speech in the popular assembly—I mean, that is clear. But whether there is simply freedom of speech outside of the assembly, at street corners, in pubs, that is the question. You know that people are not always—how shall I say—so liberal as we have become, that criticism of the government by private persons is permitted. When you speak in the assembly you are not a private person, you are a member of the sovereign. That is a different story.

Student: Also, if you listen to somebody in a pub, you are not making up your own mind.

LS: Pardon? Yes, this should all be done in the assemblies. I don't say that Rousseau would go so far, but a certain freedom of speech is inseparable from democracy, that goes without saying. But the question is whether the freedom of speech required is not sufficient, that which is allowed in the public assembly. Now of course, in a representative government that is impossible—that goes without saying—and therefore criticism of government in the press and in similar means of public communication is indispensable for liberal democracy as we know it; that is perfectly clear. But this does not necessarily mean . . . that means, for all practical purposes, surely, freedom of speech, there is no question—I mean, there could be still limitations of a secondary nature. But the key point, I think, for Rousseau is really property: there should be private property. Whether there should not be limitations to it is another matter. I mean, you know, you can do it in various ways, by tax laws, and so on.

Student: I would like to get back to this first question that started us all off on this, on the arts. Isn't it true that Rousseau's placing a higher emphasis on these, on the arts that he does place [an emphasis] on¹¹—the so-called “higher arts” would be dependent on government or society, whereas his arts wouldn't be?

LS: Yes, but this is not quite . . . they do [depend on government or society], only Emile doesn't know it yet. You must never forget that; I mean, sometimes he presents the things, of course, from Emile's point of view, in order to justify how he handles Emile's questions. But still, nevertheless, what Rousseau has in mind is that the less a man is dependent on others, the freer he is, the more natural is his life; the more natural. Now, it is possible for a cultivator of the soil who also raises some cattle to be almost¹² [*autarchic*]. I mean, his wife weaves their clothes, they get their milk from the goats or cows, and if he has a certain manual aptitude he can take care of his plow and the other things as well. At least a close approximation to autarchy is possible, and

^{xiv} E, 249; 164.

this is In the case of the artisan, it is of course different, and he will later on make it clear that the artisan is in a way freer than the peasant, because he is not bound to his land. In another sense he is of course much more dependent, because he is in need of customers, you know, which the peasant is not to the same degree.

I think one can simplify the whole issue by saying—which is absolutely true—that the goal of Rousseau's education is a man of the maximum independence, the individual of the maximum independence. Maximum independence implies always a very high degree of dependence on others, that goes without saying, but the maximum. And then from this point of view, he thinks that a man who possesses one of the simpler arts, like¹³ [that] of the carpenter, possesses a maximum of independence, because even in times of distress people still need houses and other things; and he is very mobile: if, for one reason or other, he does not find a living in place A, he can go to place B, C, and so on. This is the point which he develops later. Yes?

Student: You once stated that the classical understanding did not distinguish between government and society; in contradistinction to the modern understanding, the classics did not distinguish between government and society. Are these two . . . reunited in Rousseau's democracy?

LS: You misstate what I said. I said there is no distinction between *state* and society; that is not quite the same. In other words, when you read Aristotle—and Plato is also . . . this comes out more clearly: there are many societies or associations distinguished from the political association, the commonwealth. The family, a trade union, a business corporation, are all associations. But there is not society as a unity distinguished from that other unity called the state. Do you see that? Or, to take another modern version, society is the all-embracing unity of which the political association is a part; do you see that? Now, I think the most important element of this distinction and the earliest historically is the market. You see, when the ancients speak of economics, they mean the management of the household—you know, including even how one treats one's wife and children and slaves—but in the narrower sense it would be simply the acquisitive activity going with that. Now, when we speak of economics, we think primarily not of such a unit as the household, but of the market. The market is a kind of association of human beings, an informal association, isn't it? And this of course proved to be insufficient, and then the notion of society as it [is understood] today emerged gradually in the eighteenth and nineteenth century. But the government is of course political, that goes without saying. Now, to come back to your question.

Student: I don't know if it applies any more, but could you comment on this distinction as it applies to Rousseau's democracy?

LS: Well, in Rousseau there is no distinction. There are individuals, and there are also smaller groups like families; but there is no society in our sense. The society *is* the political society. By the way, when you read Locke, there is a certain deliberate confusion there—in parts of Locke—but when it comes down to the real issue, society proves to be political society. Society is political society. That doesn't mean, to repeat, that there are not other associations or societies, but they are sub-political, that is the point. But when we speak of society today in contradistinction to the state, we mean that the two are at least equal in dignity, or rather that

society is of higher dignity than the state. The state is meant to serve society; this is the other part of it. Now, Rousseau has in this respect the ancient view—in this respect.

Student: Isn't the principle of self-sufficiency also very important in Aristotle's attitude towards the peasant and artisan? I mean, in the *Timaeus*, for instance, where the gentleman has a lot to do with an interest in self-sufficiency.^{xv}

LS: Yes, but what is the core of his self-sufficiency? The fact that he will be a gentleman farmer, of course; he will not till the soil himself. You must never forget that; he will not till the soil. But his self-sufficiency consists essentially in his *moral* self-sufficiency. He can reasonably guide his life; he doesn't have to take orders in the sense that he is subject, nor is he such a man that he *should* take orders. A self-sufficient man in Aristotle, one can say, is a man who does not need orders to live well; and a farmer or artisan in Aristotle's point of view is a man who would need orders to live well, because of his insufficient education. That is what Aristotle meant: self-sufficiency for the good life. Here, the good life hasn't yet emerged in any sense: at best comfortable self-preservation, which is not the good life.

Student: What was—could you go over this for a second?—Rousseau's defense of private property that you mentioned earlier?

LS: It is not a defense. One could say he takes it for granted, simply.

Student: No, I mean—

LS: I do not remember a passage where he defends it. Ordinarily, frequently, he criticizes it very sharply, but nevertheless he takes it for granted.^{xvi}

Student: Because apparently we can't live without it?

LS: Yes. No, seriously, I suppose the simple common-sense observations which Aristotle makes [when he criticizes] Plato—you know, that everyone should have a sphere where he is fully responsible, because if there is common responsibility then things are done worse than if one man is responsible, and also the considerations of expediency and so on.^{xvii} So Aristotle, I would say, takes private property for granted, while emphasizing very frequently the many vices which almost necessarily follow from it.

Student: [Inaudible question, answered in the affirmative.] And wouldn't Rousseau actually be limiting himself—in an ecological sense—by limiting himself to just this bodily progress?

^{xv} While the *Timaeus* is certainly concerned with self-sufficiency, I can find no reference to the self-sufficiency of the gentleman there; the student's beginning and Strauss's response suggest that the student is referring to Aristotle's *Ethics* or *Politics*. [Ed.]

^{xvi} But see Part III of the *Political Economy*, in which Rousseau, though he does take the right to property to be "the most sacred of all the rights of citizens, offers some justification for this claim (Rousseau, 1992, 157-59),

^{xvii} Aristotle's *Politics*, 1261b30-35.

LS: Yes, he does it up to now; we have seen that: self-preservation and the well-being of the body.

Student: And there is no freedom, then. It is just a very esoteric Because the life process is completely in terms of—

LS: Well, if we do not engage in metaphysics of any kind, we have to admit that in order to live we have to get these things—food, shelter, and so on. And in order to get it we must have the freedom to get it—which can be proven empirically very simply: if someone¹⁴ [were to] fetter you, you could not even go to the drugstore at the corner and get a Coca-Cola. So, you need freedom in order to preserve yourself.

Student: Wouldn't Aristotle's idea of freedom be different than Rousseau's?

LS: Surely, that is no question.¹⁵ But that is the point: what does Rousseau understand by freedom? Part of it is simply that understanding of freedom which Hobbes and Locke had: you cannot preserve yourself if you are not free to acquire the means of your self-preservation, and if you are not free to judge of what is conducive to self-preservation. That is a certain notion of freedom. Aristotle only thinks that is not enough, because, as he puts it, men enter the city for the sake of mere life, but the city exists for the sake of the good life,^{xviii} and the true meaning of freedom would be in terms of the good life, not of means for mere life. Now, Rousseau also has a somewhat more lofty notion of freedom, but how it is related to this Hobbes-Lockean [notion], that is not easy to answer.

Student: Aristotle speaks of those who I guess in some way live outside of their societies, those who are less than men or more than men.^{xix}

LS: Yes, well, less than men, those who are completely so—how shall I say—so psychopathological, so moronic, there are such people. And on the other hand there would be people who would not need society, because they are in the highest respect self-sufficient. He did not elaborate what he meant, but he meant by that philosophers. But in a simple sense, of course, it cannot be true, because they, too, need food, shelter, and the other things.

Student: That about the ones of the lower ?

LS: What can you do with them?

Student: Is there anything which corresponds to that class or body in Rousseau?

LS: I think Rousseau would admit that there are idiots, sure. He would admit that. Mr. Schrock, I am neglecting you.

Mr. Schrock: I don't have too much clarity on what the problem of democratic rule is in Rousseau. It seems to me that you're suggesting that the *Emile* might be an ideal type, but an

^{xviii} Aristotle's *Politics* 1252b29.

^{xix} Aristotle's *Politics*, 1253a28.

impossible suggestion of how the democratic, or the average man might be made rational, if that were possible—that is, if every man could have one tutor, and so forth. But perhaps the *Emile* could have a lower aim: rather than making all men capable of exercising rationality in the assembly, as in the *Social Contract*, perhaps the *Emile* might be a suggestion of how to make a few men, a few average men, leaders.

LS: Exactly; that's it.

Student: On page 126, he says that Emile is made to lead, to rule his fellows.^{xx}

LS: Well, that is very simple; I mean, I can explain that to you. Rousseau makes a distinction between the sovereign and the government—and an explicit distinction—and it is very rare that this distinction is made as clearly prior to him. The sovereign is not the government. In the ancient democracies, the sovereign was the government. The sovereign people did not only make laws, it also deliberated about war and peace, and made war and peace, and of course judged in the law courts. The distinction between sovereign and government means that the executive and judicial actions are not actions of the people as people, but actions of individuals commissioned by the people. And this must be so if there is to be wisdom and justice in society, according to Rousseau. And so, the government is radically different from the sovereign. By the way, that is underlying, of course, the American Constitution; that goes without saying. The sovereign people delegate these and these powers to the executive, legislative, and so on.

Student: So, Emile might be the government?

LS: He would be government, sure; perhaps even more than that, perhaps even a legislator, for all we know. But that is unlikely. But surely government.

END OF TAPE SIDE ONE

LS: [tape resumes in progress] —so the sovereign people needs leaders, needs a governor, and not everyone is fit for that; and while the sovereign people must elect them, they cannot be a substitute for them. That is simple. Mr. Boyan, did you have a point?

Mr. Boyan: I had several, but . . . okay, I'll ask one, at least.

LS: Yes; the most pertinent, at least.

Mr. Boyan: When you were talking about the difference between Rousseau's and Aristotle's meaning of freedom, you said Aristotle¹⁶ thought that freedom was required by the good life. Does one judge the good life; for Aristotle, does one make judgments of what is the good life?

LS: What do you mean by that: do men know what the good life is? Of course; otherwise they couldn't speak of it. Whether *everyone* knows it, is another question. But Aristotle, I think, would say this: that every not completely corrupted individual knows what the good life is, and

^{xx} *E*, 423; 306.

even if he is aware that, for one reason or the other, he is not capable of leading it, he will have a kind of natural deference to it. Say, for example, the farmers in the country, relatively uncorrupted people: they would naturally bow to the scholars, to their betters. The people in the big cities, like Athens, especially those at the waterfront—Jimmy Hoffa’s boys^{xxi}—they would of course *not* bow to them, but they are obviously particularly corrupt people. I mean, I stated this; it has a longer story, but in effect it comes down to this.

Student: My only difficulty with it is, then, what kind of freedom is that?

LS: A freedom in the service of comfortable self-preservation is one thing; a freedom in the service of a good, morally good life is another thing. I don’t say that they are incompatible, but they are different considerations. For Aristotle, the whole emphasis is on the latter freedom, whereas for Hobbes and Locke, the whole emphasis is on the other one. Rousseau is somewhere, in a way very difficult to describe, in between. Mr. Morrison.

Mr. Morrison: [Inaudible phrase to the effect that he is going back to what has been said before]. Did you say that this distinction between sovereign and government, that Rousseau had made it more sharply than previous people?

LS: Yes. Well, I know only of one man . . . you must not forget, in classical philosophy it cannot exist, because the sovereign for Plato and Aristotle is the government, or vice versa; not narrowly conceived, I mean not the present administration, but the sovereign is the ruling body—not necessarily the present magistrate; this is uninteresting—you know, the ruling body. The ruling body may be a few, or may be many, that doesn’t make any . . . There is a ruling body, at least in every republican society; and this is the sovereign or the government. Whereas in Rousseau you have the clear distinction, and prepared by certain things in Locke—for example, in Locke’s distinction between the people and what we call the supreme power—but it is by no means as clear in Locke as it is in Rousseau.^{xxii}

Student: Were you talking about Marsilius?

LS: That’s it; exactly. Marsilius of Padua^{xxiii} is the only earlier thinker of whom I know who has something like this distinction. How does he call it? I forgot the name.

Student: [Inaudible answer].

LS: *Principates* is government, and how does he call . . . the *populus*; the *populus* is . . . Of course he doesn’t speak of sovereign, naturally, although the term sovereign stems from medieval Latin: *soveranus*, *superanus*; but he doesn’t [speak of sovereign]. But in effect, I mean, one cannot read Marsilius without being reminded of the Rousseauan distinction.^{xxiv} But I

^{xxi} Hoffa was president of the International Brotherhood of Teamsters (a labor union) in the 1950s and 1960s.

^{xxii} Rousseau, 1994, 166-70; Locke, *Second Treatise*, Chapter 13, S49.

^{xxiii} Marsilius (circa 1275-circa 1342), an Italian political philosopher, wrote *Defender of the Peace* (1324).

^{xxiv} In several places in *Defender of the Peace*, but see 2, 12.3.

believe in Marsilius it is not ultimately maintained, the distinction. That would be a very long story, but in . . . yes, that is perfectly defensible, what you say. That is the last question now; otherwise we don't make any headway.

Student: Did this gentleman here mean to imply that Emile is supposed to be a ruler of a new kind of society? Because I think there are many

LS: Yes, you can say that. I mean, he would be very best fitted for being a member of the government in a good republic to be founded after [a] revolution.

Student: I was going to comment that in the beginning, in the very opening, Rousseau says that Plato's *Republic* is a treatise on politics, but that actually it's a good treatise on education^{xxv}; whereas, as you see later

LS: On civic education, Rousseau says.

Student: Yes, and he also compares the

LS: No, this is . . . I think we are I will only repeat what I said. At the beginning, Rousseau presents civic education and human education as incompatible; and in the course of the argument, by the fact that the man with the best human education proves to be educated for guiding and ruling men, the two educations seem to come together, to coincide. But this is not quite true.

Student: He also, on page 127, just after this gentleman quotes here, that incident about Lord Hyde, who [inaudible], he says he thinks the education of the child is very promising; and he says, because "The question is exactly adapted to the child's age, the answer is perfectly simple; but see what precision it implies in the child's judgment," this child has been educated somewhat like Rousseau. Then he says: "Thus did the pupil of Aristotle master the famous steed which no squire had ever been able to tame."^{xxvi} Is he thinking of Alexander there?

LS: Yes, he must mean Alexander, but I don't know.

Student: And Rousseau is to Emile as Aristotle is to Alexander?

LS: Yes, but you must not press it; but something of that you can say.

Now, we go on. On page 151, paragraph 2, we find a very clear statement of Rousseau's goals of education, in the middle: "He will wish to know the reason of everything . . . he will not admit anything by supposition," i.e. on the basis of unexamined premises.^{xxvii} That is a very strong statement: the child without prejudices. He does not assert anything the truth of which he does not know.

^{xxv} E, 250; 165.

^{xxvi} E, 425; 307.

^{xxvii} E, 460; 336.

Page 152, in the fourth paragraph, you find a statement, when he speaks about the first preparation for social life, and then Rousseau really says—one wouldn't believe it; I didn't remember it; I was quite shocked when I read it—"Money is the true link of society."^{xxviii} Here you see the connection between Rousseau and the British tradition—Hobbes at the top: money is the blood of the body politic.^{xxix} So, how much Rousseau, in spite of all his criticism of this tradition, takes over.

Student: It is modified, though.

LS: Yes, sure it is modified. But still, that he would say that! I mean, Aristotle would not even say it provisionally. Good; fine. And the reason is clear: because if the primary end is comfortable self-preservation, and comfortable self-preservation presupposes exchange, and exchange is not reasonably possible without money, it follows absolutely necessarily.

Student: I think we're passing the first of maybe the three turning points in the converging of the two lines, and I believe they are going to come under the catechetical lines,¹⁷ [the world], flesh, and the devil; but this business of taking up the trade of the artisan is definitely pushing Emile into the world; it seems the first radically not natural—

LS: Yes, but in what sense? That is quite true: it occurred to me very strongly when Father Vaughan read his paper; namely, that in a way, of course, he becomes already socialized in this stage. But why does Rousseau nevertheless say it is not yet socialization? Because it is only calculation which comes in, so to say, the market. He enters the world of exchange of goods and services, and not more. The more comes in in the fourth book. I mean, natural man as Rousseau understands him comes into society in order to satisfy his bodily needs—and the bodily needs and the satisfaction of these needs is of course what one ordinarily understands by the economic life. You know, he becomes socialized to the extent to which he now gains understanding of the economic life—not more—and the expression of it, what was read, that he must know only the bare minimum of property right, because naturally, exchange is impossible without lines being drawn regarding property.

Now, on page 154, in the note there is another remark, in the middle: "I have made myself an inviolable law: *never* to demand from him something of which the reason was not within his"—how do you translate it, *à sa poignée*?

Student: That he didn't understand; in his grasp.

LS: "in his grasp."^{xxx} That only concerns what we have seen so much. We must read 155, the fifth paragraph.

^{xxviii} E, 461; 337.

^{xxix} Hobbes, 1994, Chapter 26, para. 11, pp. 163-64. Unlike Rousseau, who insists that money can be anything, including difficult-to-move things like cattle, Hobbes observes that money cannot be the blood of the commonwealth unless it is portable.

^{xxx} E, 465; 340.

Mr. Reinken: “At the beginning of this second period we took advantage of the fact that our strength was more than enough for our needs—”

LS: I mention only that what he calls here “second period,” he called previously the “third period.” That is something for Mr. Seltzer to observe. Go on.

Mr. Reinken: “to enable us to get outside ourselves. We have ranged the heavens and measured the earth; we have sought out^{xxx} the laws of nature; we have explored the whole of our island. Now let us return to ourselves, let us unconsciously approach our own dwelling. We are happy indeed if we do not find it already occupied by the dreaded foe, who is preparing to seize it.”^{xxxii}

LS: Yes; who is that foe? Who is that enemy?

Student: Sophie.

LS: Well, yes. I think we all understand, although your answer was not exact, because you took only an individual, instead of the kind: sex. That comes in Book 4.

Student: Sophie is woman; she is just an example.

LS: I see. Yes, that one could perhaps say. So this we must keep in mind for the plan of the whole: the enemy comes in only in Book 4. Now, in the sequel, he speaks of the necessity of the division of labor and of civil society. But again this whole thing is based, as he makes clear at the end of page 156, paragraph 2, [on self-preservation]: “The first law of nature is the concern with self-preservation.”^{xxxiii} This is said all the time. Negatively expressed: the strongest natural aversion is that against death, as he also says in the immediate sequel. I think we should read—in spite of the late time: it is very important—page 156, paragraph 4.

Mr. Reinken: “‘Sir, I must live,’ said a miserable writer of lampoons to the minister who reproved him for his infamous trade. ‘I do not see the necessity,’ replied the great man coldly.”^{xxxiv}

LS: I know a better version of that, I think, also told by Rousseau elsewhere: you know, a man—how do you call him, who delivers grain and this sort of thing to armies?

Student: Factors.

LS: No, no; I mean in war-time. At any rate, such an individual had cheated the government and he was caught, and then he fell to the feet of Louis XIV, and says, “Monsieur, I must live.” And Louis XIV, with perfect detachment, said, “I do not see the necessity thereof.”^{xxxv} All right.

^{xxxi} “Recueillir” is the verb—“have gathered” is closer to the sense.

^{xxxii} *E*, 466; 341.

^{xxxiii} *E*, 467; 342.

^{xxxiv} *E*, 467; 342.

^{xxxv} This story is told in several versions; I cannot find the retelling by Rousseau to which Strauss refers. [Ed.]

Mr. Reinken: “This answer, excellent from the minister, would have been barbarous and untrue in any other mouth. Every man must live; this argument, which appeals to every one with more or less force in proportion to his humanity, strikes me as unanswerable when applied to oneself. Since our dislike of death is the strongest of those aversions nature has implanted in us, it follows that everything is permissible to the man who has no other means of living. The principles, which teach the good man to count his life a little thing and to sacrifice it at duty's call, are far removed from this primitive simplicity. Happy are those nations where one can be good without effort, and just without conscious virtue.”^{xxxvi}

LS: “Without virtue.” Why does¹⁸ [she] make this insertion?^{xxxvii} So, in other words, goodness is distinguished from virtue, as you see. Self-preservation is compatible with goodness. It must be modified when man enters society. And there, duty and virtue come in; and duty and virtue are something fundamentally different from goodness. That is a key distinction in Rousseau. Have you found any man making a distinction between goodness and virtue before?

Student: In the *Second Discourse*.

LS: Yes, but that is the same Jean-Jacques. I mean prior to him.

Student: Machiavelli.

LS: Machiavelli. What does he mean by that?

Student: Well, *virtù* is prudence, or . . .

LS: It is more than prudence.

Student: Isn't it for something^{xxxviii}?

LS: Yes, combination. Surely, shrewdness plus energy, as they say today; and goodness means something like kindness. And Rousseau makes the distinction in an entirely different sense, but the distinction is there, and much could be said about it. It is absolutely crucial, this distinction for Rousseau. Society becomes necessary because of the conflict of interests. And therefore it becomes necessary to redefine the highest moral rule in the sense, pursue your good with the *least* evil to others. And here it becomes necessary in this stage to establish government, or to replace goodness by obedience to the law and public spirit, i.e. virtue.

On page 157, paragraph 2, there is an important reference to the coming revolution as a reason for the *Emile* type of education: these French nobility can no longer be sure of its traditional way of life; they may lose all their possessions—as it happened—and they must prepare themselves

^{xxxvi} E, 467; 342.

^{xxxvii} Foxley inserts “conscious.” In light of what follows, I think it more likely that Strauss refers to the translator than that he refers to Rousseau. [Ed.]

^{xxxviii} Or possibly “force” or “forcing,” in light of the sequel.

for such an emergency.^{xxxix} But I think it is equally important to add that the coming revolution is due to the natural principles of society stated in the two preceding paragraphs. If these principles take hold of men, then they will destroy the *ancien régime*.

Student: Thus fulfilling the prophecy.

LS: Yes, I think that is true. And in the sequel, page 158, paragraph 2, he speaks of that new society without privileges. At the end of this paragraph, if you read that: “He who eats without working.”

Mr. Reinken: “Man in society is bound to work; rich or poor, weak or strong, every idler is a thief.”^{xl}

LS: Yes, “every idle citizen is a scoundrel.” So, in other words, all must become workers. Well, at that time, it did not mean manual workers; it could also mean gentlemen—and it meant that perhaps even more. But this is . . . there can no longer be a leisure class. The leisure class is a class of scoundrels. You must have heard this quite often.

Student: This very striking sort of inserted passage here about the coming revolution: is this a commonplace at the time?

LS: I think there were more remarks all to this effect. But we have to take it here, and I think the meaning is this: that while Rousseau speaks of the revolution as a reason, as an incentive to the upper class in France to modify the education of their offspring, Rousseau states on occasion why the revolution is morally necessary: because the old society is based on principles contradicting the true natural law, which he has stated—I mean self-preservation, equal right of self-preservation of all. Therefore, since self-preservation is not possible without some property, if only earned wages—and this applies equally to all—there is no place for a functionless upper class, as people called it later, you know. And the French nobility had become an almost functionless upper class, you know, by virtue of the system of Louis XIV.

Student: How much importance can you place on the fact that here he speaks in his own name about revolution, whereas in the book that he was writing at the same time, the [*Social*] *Contract*, when he speaks of revolution there, he doesn’t speak in his own name?

LS: Because who would look in a book on education, somewhere buried in the middle, for a political passage? Whereas in the short *Social Contract*, 100 pages, every sentence becomes immediately noticeable. That I think would be—

Student: But couldn’t you make a case for having the two of them together?

LS: You have to. After all, he was not—how do they call them, these men with two minds?—schizophrenic. Yes, I really should study that more.

^{xxxix} E, 468-69; 343-44.

^{xl} E, 470; 344.

Student: There is one point of interest beyond this, which was that he says in the *Confessions*, that he was surprised to see that the censors, or whoever it was, had taken some slices out of Books 1 and 2, and had not taken it out of the later books.^{xli} I think it was out of 1 and 2 that they took it.

LS: I must say, Rousseau was an extremely intelligent man, but I believe his practical judgment left much to be desired; and [the]¹⁹ shock which he got on account of the persecution because of the *Emile* and the *Social Contract* is, I think, not surprising at all. It was perhaps not so surprising in the circumstances, because the French government was rather easy-going at that time, as you know. But of course, this was an easy-going practice, the old laws were still in force. Books could be burned, both in France and Geneva, and they were burned.

Now, Rousseau did one thing which in one sense is very honorable, and in another sense shows this lack of prudence. There were people who had written much worse books from the point of view of the French government—the French materialists, you know, La Mettrie and d’Holbach and these people—and nothing happened to them.^{xlii} Why? They were in Rousseau’s view dishonest men: they published their books without their names in the title page. But this cannot have been as bad at the time, because such a model of decency as Montesquieu had done the same. But Rousseau insisted that he wouldn’t do anything illegal: his name [appears] on the title page. A French minister, Malesherbes, had assured him; but of course Malesherbes had not such an authority, and later on, through some ladies of high standing—I don’t know; it was kind of intrigue—Rousseau got into troubles.²⁰ I mean, he had in fact acted against the law because the government had the right to decide which books should or should not be burned.

Student: The odd thing is that they didn’t cut this bit out. It seems to me that if they were cutting anything out—

LS: I don’t believe that the government at that time feared a revolution. You know, governments are, in a way—they ordinarily notice it latest, at the last. No, I think it was chiefly the attack on revealed religion in the profession of the Savoyard Vicar, *this* which [got him into trouble in France] and therefore also in Geneva, which, after all, was not a monarchy.

Student: Couldn’t it also be similar to what happened under the Czar, that the Czar’s censor simply gets tired of reading as he goes on?

LS: Well, that was not quite so. No, that happened, surely, but in this case there were. . . . Somehow the attention of the censors—men of high standing and very educated men—was drawn to the fact that there are certain fishy things in these books.

^{xli} Rousseau, 1995, 474-75.

^{xlii} Julien Offray De La Mettrie, French physician and philosopher, wrote *The Natural History of the Soul* (1745) and *Man, a Machine* (1747). However, Strauss is mistaken in one respect: both books were burned, and La Mettrie had to leave France, and then Holland. Paul Henri Thiry D’Holbach (1723-89), German-French philosopher and a prominent figure in the French Enlightenment, wrote *Christianity Unveiled* (1761) and *System of Nature* (1770).

Now, on page 158, in the third paragraph, there is a beautiful formulation of all occupations which furnish man with subsistence.^{xliii} That which approximates him most to the state of nature is manual labor. Approximation to the state of nature, I think, that is the best formula; one can find what Rousseau is driving at. Return to the state of nature is impossible, but an approximation to the state of nature on the level of developed humanity, that is what Rousseau [inaudible] wanted. That is only the other side of what I said at the beginning of today's meeting. The state of nature or the natural man cannot possibly be simply a standard for Rousseau, because of his subhuman character. Only certain aspects of him can remain authoritative: his freedom, his independence, nothing else. And Rousseau is in a much greater difficulty than Hobbes and Locke. That I think I should explain in connection with what I said at the beginning. [Blackboard] I cannot reinterpret this picture, because I have forgotten the precise meaning of it. Well, Aristotle, teleology: there is a natural end of man. That is the link, we can say, between the "is" and the "ought," if we can apply this distinction to Aristotle at all. Now, Hobbes and Locke destroy that; they think that it leads nowhere, it is wrong from every point of view. What do they do? They say we must start not from the end of man—if we do that, we arrive at a Utopia, at a polity of gentlemen which has never existed if you apply strict standards and are not satisfied with what these ruling classes say about themselves—but we must start from nature. That is clear. But how can nature give us a pointer if it is not itself directed towards an end? Answer: within the natural passions of man, there is one which is the most fundamental and, for this reason, the most powerful, so that it is clear that any social arrangement which contradicts it is doomed to failure; and this basic passion is the passion for self-preservation or fear of violent death. And then Hobbes argued that out very well—I mean, once you grant the premises, what he says follows—then you must have—since self-preservation necessarily leads to conflict, to the war of everybody against everybody—you have to have government, and the government must be omnipotent. That was²¹ [Hobbes's] scheme. Now, the state of nature, the state in which there is only self-preservation and other passions, and not yet government and law, is a standard, but a negative one: something to get away *from*. If you have understood that, that in its defects the state of nature points to the perfect state, [the] state of civil society, that is roughly the Hobbes-Lockean scheme.

But in Rousseau, at least if you take the *Second Discourse* seriously, this is of course destroyed, because the state of nature is *good*. It doesn't point away from itself, do you see that? I mean, if it is a state of perfect [solitude] in every . . . a distance of twenty miles they live away from [each other]. If you can barely know, from the distance, of others, how can there be a war of everybody against everybody? They could have lived in it forever and ever. And therefore there was the need of these famous accidents for bringing them together, and therefore for the end of the state of nature proper. This is the peculiarity of Rousseau's teaching.

On page 165, in the second paragraph. Here he describes, in a somewhat precious sentence, the goal of the education: "He must work as a peasant and think as a philosopher in order not to be as lazy as a savage."^{xliv} It is impossible henceforth for man to find his happiness in living as a savage—if man was *ever* happy as a savage—and the solution is, he must work with his hands like a peasant, but as free from prejudice, at the same time, as a philosopher. That is the goal of the education in a single phrase, one could say.

^{xliii} E, 470; 344-45.

^{xliv} E, 480; 353.

There comes then a passage about the intellectual education which is very important, but I don't see how we can handle that in the short time which we still have. That begins on page 165, in the fifth paragraph. There Rousseau tells us what an *idée*, idea, is, and this is fundamentally the Lockean view of the situation.^{xlv}

On page 165, paragraph 5; page 166, paragraph 2; and 169, paragraph 4; Mr. Seltzer, you have to consider that when you come to the Profession of Faith, when he speaks of the human soul there. We come to that now. On page 167, paragraph 5, he speaks in the third sentence or fourth sentence: "There is a great difference between the natural man living in the state of nature and the natural man living in the state of society."^{xlvi} It is now admitted that there can be a natural man in the state of society. That is, on the highest level, our Emile. The conflict between nature and society, between the education of man and the education of the citizen *seems* to be completely resolved at this point.

On page 167, bottom, to 168, top, you will see that this is now again called the third age of human life.^{xlvii}

On page 168, paragraph 2, a statement is made regarding the method for transforming sensations into ideas, for transforming what Hume called impressions into ideas. Unfortunately, we cannot go into that.^{xlviii} Let us turn rather to page 169, the second paragraph from the bottom.

Mr. Reinken: "Compelled to learn for himself, he uses his own reason not that of others, for there must be no submission to authority if you would have no submission to convention. Most of our errors are due to others more than ourselves."

LS: In other words, if I am sufficiently careful considering the formation of my ideas out of sensations, I am perfectly free from error. The chief source of error is authority, the opinion of others. Yes.

Mr. Reinken: "This continual exercise should develop a vigor of mind like that acquired by the body through labor and weariness. Another advantage is that his progress is in proportion to his strength, neither mind nor body carries more than it can bear. When the understanding lays hold of things before they are stored in the memory, what is drawn from that store is his own; while we are in danger of never finding anything of our own in a memory over-burdened with undigested knowledge."^{xlix}

LS: In other words, that is his criticism of the traditional education: burdening of the memory. It has been repeated *n* times since. But in Rousseau this has this very precise meaning: what you only know through memory you have learned originally merely by being told, without having understood it. So memory belongs together with opinion and authority and all three are opposed

^{xlv} E, 481; 353.

^{xlvi} E, 483; 355.

^{xlvii} E, 484; 356.

^{xlviii} E, 484; 356.

^{xlix} E, 486; 358.

to understanding. No burdening of the memory, because the thing which alone counts is the strengthening of the understanding. In connection with this, he says in the next paragraph—I translate it: “He has a universal mind, not by its content,”^l we can say, “but by the faculty to acquire enlightenment.”^{li} So, *esprit universel*, a universal mind, that is the goal of the education. In the next paragraph, “Emile has only natural and purely physical knowledge. He does not even know the name of history; nor what that is, metaphysics and morals.”^{lii} This was mentioned by Father Vaughan. Let us consider only the last paragraph of this book, or the paragraph before the last: “In a word.”

Mr. Reinken: “Emile is possessed of all that portion of virtue which concerns himself. To acquire the social virtues he only needs a knowledge of the relations which make those virtues necessary; he only lacks knowledge which he is quite ready to receive.”^{liii}

LS: So, that goes through: up to now he is a strictly asocial being. I mean, except in the way in which a man participating in the market can be said to be social; you know, as exchanger of goods he is social, but *only* as such. One of you found a difficulty there. Because he is and is not social; strictly speaking, he is not social, because as a mere member of the market, you are not truly a social being: you are as much concerned merely with your own self as you would be if you did not participate in the market. Now, the next paragraph.

Mr. Reinken: “He thinks not of others but of himself, and prefers that others should do the same. He makes no claim upon them, and acknowledges no debt to them.”

LS: In other words, he is not unjust: he does not raise [a] claim on the others without giving the others [a] claim on him, but he is strictly . . . that is anti-social; he is asocial. He has no obligations to others and he does not believe that the others have any obligation to him.

Mr. Reinken: “He is alone in the midst of human society, he depends on himself alone, for he is all that a boy can be at his age. He has no errors, or at least only such as are inevitable; he has no vices, or only those from which no man can escape. His body is healthy, his limbs are supple, his mind is accurate and unprejudiced, his heart is free and untroubled by passion. Pride, the earliest and the most natural of passions, has scarcely shown itself. Without disturbing the peace of others, he has passed his life contented, happy, and free, so far as nature allows. Do you think that the earlier years of a child, who has reached his fifteenth year in this condition, have been wasted?”^{liv}

LS: Here²² [she] calls it pride, but in French it is *amour-propre*²³. It is surely . . . pride is a defensible translation, but it is of course not quite exact. Rousseau makes a distinction between *amour de soi*—self-love—and *amour-propre*, which, literally, could as well mean self-love. But it is just a kind of arbitrary coinage prior to Rousseau that it took on a slightly negative meaning, and especially the meaning of pride and vanity. Rousseau calls here *amour-propre* “the first and

^l Strauss translates *lumières* as “content,” but “enlightenment” is better.

^{li} *E*, 487; 358.

^{lii} *E*, 487; 358.

^{liii} *E*, 488; 359.

^{liv} *E*, 488; 359.

the most natural of all passions.” By this he implies that self-preservation, the concern with it, is not a passion. So, passion can be used in a variety of senses. I mean, passion is anything which disturbs the mind, and self-preservation does not disturb the mind necessarily. The most natural of all the passions is this *amour-propre*. So, pride—if we may use this²⁴ translation—does not yet exist, because he is radically asocial. He is not yet concerned with the opinion of others. That only confirms what we have seen hitherto. And in the Fourth Book, with the awakening of sexual desires, then there comes the socialization, to use a term which is now frequently used.

I would like to mention only one point which I believe I have not emphasized enough, and that is that while *amour-propre* is frequently used by Rousseau to designate the root of all evil, that is not universally so in Rousseau. He says somewhere in the *Second Discourse*, *amour-propre* is the origin of all our virtues and all our vices.^{lv} In other words, everything specifically human—because self-preservation is common to men and the beasts—is akin somehow to *amour-propre*. And therefore the citizen, for example, in the full sense, is unthinkable without *amour-propre*; and the clearest sign of it is patriotism, which is traced by Rousseau to *amour-propre*. In other words, as long as mere self-preservation determines a man’s willingness to enter civil society, it is without sentiment; it is a mere calculation: I am better off as a member of society than without it. And part of the sentiment of patriotism is linked up with self-love, with pride²⁵ [in] this particular society in contradistinction to others. Even the legislator, when you read in the *Social Contract*, Book 2, Chapter 7, the beginning: the motive of the legislator is love of immortal glory, which belongs under the heading of *amour-propre*.^{lvi} Mr. Morrison?

Mr. Morrison: *Amour-propre* is often translated, I think, as self-respect.

LS: Yes, it *could* take on this. . . .

Mr. Morrison: I was wondering if there is a relation between self-preservation and self-respect; that self-respect is [inaudible] self-preservation beyond

LS: No, there is no connection there. Self-preservation is what man shares with the brutes. Only, man can use his reason, and must use his reason, for preserving himself, because he doesn’t have sufficiently good instincts. But reason used in the service of self-preservation has nothing to do with what the others think about you. In the moment one is concerned about the others, what the others think about oneself, then *amour-propre* exists. Now, there are, of course, various forms. There can be a very silly vanity; and in the highest sense it is desire for immortal glory. But all these phenomena have this in common, that man is concerned with what other human beings think about him. That, I believe one can say, is probably the most general definition of *amour-propre* which one can give. We must keep this in mind.

Mr. Morrison: I was only thinking of it in the sense that for a person to have an idea that he himself is worth something is perhaps a half-way stage

LS: No, no; that is *amour-propre*. Because in self-preservation no such . . . because one cannot, say, be worth something without some incipient comparison; and in the moment comparison

^{lv} *SD*, 189; 63.

^{lvi} Rousseau, 1994, 2.7, p. 154.

enters, *amour-propre* begins. But as long as you are concerned merely with self-preservation, you are wholly indifferent to the opinion of others.

Student: But it is in this sense that *amour-propre*, self-respect, could be seen as being in a particularly close connection with self-preservation, perhaps as some kind of next step up from it.

LS: How? That I fail to see.

Student: The consciousness of self-preservation.

LS: Only accidentally; because sometime your self-preservation may depend on what others think about you—only in this respect—but that is accidental. For example, take any of these everyday occurrences in the old American West: whether you are suspected of being a horse-thief and therefore hanged or not depends very much on what people think about you. But that is accidental; that does not belong to the essence of self-preservation.

Student: It is conceivable to think of a situation where self-respect would lead you to deny self-preservation.

LS: Exactly; sure. I mean, all these things both [those] which elevate man beyond mere self-preservation—like patriotism—and those which degrade him—by being concerned with what do these people whisper about me—all these things belong together; and therefore Rousseau says *amour-propre* is the root of all our virtues and all our vices. The motive which men have to develop virtues and vices proper is always in this sense *amour-propre*. So one may say *amour-propre*, in contradistinction to self-love, is specifically human. Whereas self-preservation in itself is not specifically human; while the means for self-preservation—reason in the service of self-preservation—is of course specifically human. Mr. Schrock.

Mr. Schrock: Would Aristotle say that the concern for honor, for instance, in a good man is akin to this notion of *amour-propre*?

LS: Yes; but *amour-propre* has a kind of derogatory implication, nevertheless, which is absent in Aristotle. What Aristotle says about a magnanimous man—he is a man deserving great honors and claiming them—then there is no indication [of discreditable motives].^{lvii} Perhaps Aristotle was too Jane Austenian here, that is a long question; but still Aristotle has no indication of anything—how shall I say it?—low. In other words, he would not do the right thing, he would act wrongly, in not claiming these honors. It has a kind of objectivity which has nothing to do with his subjective feelings, if one may use these terms.

Student: I don't know the German terms, but Nietzsche makes a distinction between pride and vanity.^{lviii} Is pride self-sufficient? Is it something like the Aristotelian magnanimous man's . . . he discourages . . .

^{lvii} *Nicomachean Ethics*, Book 4, Chapter 3, 1123b.

^{lviii} *Daybreak*, Aphorism 365; *Beyond Good and Evil*, Aphorism 261.

LS: Aristotle—let us put it this way—refuses to trace any virtue to passion. Virtue is for Aristotle an attitude toward passion, and never a passion. Think of the Platonic simple image, the charioteer and the two horses, the noble and the base horse.^{lix} These are the passions, the horses. The charioteer is reason. And virtue is the charioteer. It needs some horses; but not as the motive, but in order to control them. For example, the desire for honors is very common—I don't say universal: I have seen people who are absolutely indifferent to them—but very common. And now, what is virtue? It is not the desire for honor, but the attitude toward it: that you claim honors when it is right to claim them and for the reason why it is right to claim them—namely, for example, one reason could be that it is simply showing disrespect, as you degrade, in a way, high office if you do not demand the honors habitually going with it; this kind of thing. I mean, it is thinkable, after all, that a man without being in any way passionately interested in honors would demand them for objective reasons. Is that not imaginable? I mean, very simple case: I am sure there must be many officers, subaltern officers, and even noncommissioned officers, who insisted on being properly treated by recruits without being in any way inflated by that. Simply, you have to do it; it is part of the military order—and that can even be applied to the political order. For example, it is thinkable that someone sets the record of his activity straight, as, say, Churchill has done, without being concerned with fame as such, but so that people may be able to judge properly of what was done while he was in charge of British policies; it is possible. And I think that Aristotle has in mind, whether his notion that. . . . Well, Aristotle never believed that true virtue is very frequent, but he would say it is possible, definitely possible, and he presented it as how it is when it is the genuine stuff; and therefore there is no passionate motive, strictly speaking, for virtue. I mean, in our present-day sense of the word passion, the word passion has changed its sense so much that we speak today of passion as a term of praise very frequently. And for Aristotle, passion is not a term of praise, nor in itself of dispraise: it depends very much what passion and what degree of it. But the seat of virtue is never in the passions.

And in modern times, this . . . hat the seventeenth and eighteenth century thinkers tried to do was to find a passionate substitute for virtue. That could be done Well, Hobbes was a tough fellow, and he felt that fear of violent death, that makes a man good. The more popular version is, of course, sentiments—I mean nice sentiments, from which sentimentality was derived—that is also not reason in the driver's seat; on the contrary: it is sentiment. Mr. Mueller.

Mr. Mueller: Rousseau makes generosity earlier depend on . . . I don't know whether it's on *amour-propre* or will in a way, but it is [in] a real sense that Emile's sense was founded in his true superiority in that business of raising the pigs.^{lx}

LS: But that is awkward for him, you know, for Rousseau. Because after all, whether you can I mean, one thing are the virtues of a man fully developed and a man of outstanding virtue—that is what Aristotle has in mind when he writes—and another thing is what you can do with immature human beings, especially children. Now, Aristotle has made this very clear; he hasn't spoken of competition and this kind of thing, but the sense of shame is his example. And

^{lix} The famous image from the *Phaedrus*, 246a-257b.

^{lx} While Emile does know agriculture better than many farmers (*E*, 804-85; 622), it is unclear what specific reference the student has in mind. These mystery pigs are mentioned again by a student at the beginning of Session 13.

you see sense of shame means a sense that one has done the wrong thing. And Aristotle in his wisdom says that the virtuous man does not have sense of shame: he does not do anything wrong, period.^{lxi} But young people who cannot possibly have the maturity are bound to make mistakes, and it suits them well. And the same could be applied to desire for superiority as a motive. But one must also say—I mean, however fantastic these statements of Aristotle may sound—when you look at them in specific cases—and Aristotle bids you, as it were, all the time, look at it in terms of the specific case—they are sensible. For example, when you see a man being ambitious—let us assume in the higher sense, not with money and positions,²⁶ so that it is in a higher sense—and yet whenever you become aware of it, one cannot help feeling it is petty. We cannot admire a man to the extent to which he is not dedicated. He can say very well—and that is absolutely necessary, I think, from the point of view of any humanity—that it is almost impossible for a man to be without that, and yet this is not what we mean in esteeming a man. That Aristotle has in mind, this dedication so that you do not need a passion. Although we call today such dedication passion; and that is a long story.

Student: Yet, it wasn't a contradiction in terms for the magnanimous man to fall away, to do something that wasn't right; and if no one was around, would he still blush?

LS: He wouldn't do it. He simply wouldn't make a mistake. I mean, in other words, what do you mean? He could conceivably do something, something perfectly all right if one is alone, and by some accident someone is there without his knowing it. Well, then you cannot really say he did something wrong. I don't know; for example, not being fully dressed, and yet someone happens to be in the room because he has entered through the window: he could not possibly have known it. That is nothing to be ashamed of; it may be slightly embarrassing. No, Aristotle means that. Plato's view is somewhat different, because Plato's teaching about *eros* as present in *every* high thing could be crudely rendered passion, for example, the philosophic passion. But it is interesting that Plato does not tell it the philosophic *pathos*, but the philosophic *eros*, which is not quite the same thing. Rabbi Weiss.

Rabbi Weiss: I am a little confused about the meaning of *amour-propre*. Emile does have a regard for himself, doesn't he?

LS: But this does not come up. No. I mean, is a puppy, or a dog for that matter, vain? He is in this sense naive; he doesn't know this. Is it not thinkable that man also may be [indifferent to what others think of him]? Children when playing, sometimes, are also wholly indifferent to what the other children think about them; they are completely dedicated. Emile is such a child—that is the point—who doesn't *know* that. You can make an experiment: sometimes you see extreme cases of people who have a kind of persecution mania and think that all other people have no other concern but with them; you know, whenever someone makes a remark, they assume they are meant by it. Do you know this kind of thing; have you seen these people? I have seen them. Now, if you take this extreme case, you can by a simple process of the imagination figure out a case of someone who is wholly immune to this kind of thought; and one can say, in a sense this is an absolutely naive man, I mean a man who is not in any sense self-conscious. That is what he means.

^{lxi} *Nicomachean Ethics*, 1128b9-35.

Student: But then, can't such a man have virtue?

LS: Surely he can; but he does not have it yet.

Student: I understand that Emile doesn't have virtue; but I concluded from the *Second Discourse* that one problem

LS: No [inaudible] that is what Rousseau seems to mean, that without the impulse of a passion, of such a passion, of *amour-propre*, nothing will be done. I mean, there is a statement, I think Cicero makes it somewhere: how come that the philosophers who write about contempt of glory—books—put their name on the title page?^{lxii} In other words, surely complete absence of it will be very rare; to that extent Rousseau is right. But the point. . . . It may be only a difference of degree, but I believe it is an essential difference, whether virtue is altogether understood in terms of passions. Spinoza's teaching: a passion can be overcome only by another passion,^{lxiii} and, say, the passion for glory could overcome all kinds of other passions, and if it is a lofty enough notion of glory it could lead to very high things. But I can only say this is not the Aristotelian, and fundamentally not the Platonic understanding.

Student: Going back to something where you first replied to the question about sovereignty and the magistrates in Rousseau's scheme. The thing that I am not clear about is, as I understand his ordering of government as far as it is the executive arm of the sovereign, it seems that the magistrates themselves only execute orders which are given to them by the sovereignty.

LS: What about war and peace?

END OF TAPE

¹ Deleted "was, did."

² Deleted "have."

³ Deleted "in this."

⁴ Deleted "but."

⁵ Deleted "I."

⁶ Deleted "he calls."

⁷ Deleted "here."

⁸ Deleted "Say."

⁹ Deleted "I mean."

¹⁰ Deleted "so."

¹¹ Deleted "those would be."

^{lxii} *Tusculan Disputations*, 1.15.

^{lxiii} *Ethics*, Part 4, P7.

¹² Deleted “autarch.”

¹³ Deleted “those.”

¹⁴ Deleted “would.”

¹⁵ Deleted “But you must.”

¹⁶ Deleted “meant by that.”

¹⁷ Deleted “moral.”

¹⁸ Deleted “he.”

¹⁹ Deleted “his.”

²⁰ Deleted “and in a perfectly”

²¹ Deleted “Rousseau’s.”

²² Deleted “he.”

²³ Deleted second “*amour propre*.”

²⁴ Deleted “term.”

²⁵ Deleted “of.”

²⁶ Deleted “and.”

Session 10

[In progress] **LS:** —certain difficulties in enunciation which we have in common, where I couldn't follow you.ⁱ The only thing which I did not understand was the end.

Student: I have seen that I have to conclude it somehow.

LS: That was surely a frank statement. The main point came out very clearly, namely that the theme now in this part, the key theme is pity, compassion; and that is, in a way, Rousseau's moral teaching. And secondly you point out very well that this is a very problematic thing, and that Rousseau was aware of it. This I found particularly satisfactory. You said self-preservation is the highest good. Does he say so? No. I mean, I do not know; I don't remember exactly, but we will see shortly when we come to the passage. That it is the primary good, there is no question about that. I keep this paper; I return it to you next time. Next time, it's . . .

Now, let us begin without any further ado. We are on page 172, at the beginning of Book 4. In the Fourth Book he will now speak of Emile when he is about fifteen, sixteen—puberty; puberty is the great divide. “We are born twice,”ⁱⁱ he says; “once for existing, and then for living; once for the species and then for sex.”ⁱⁱⁱ And this sexual birth is now the theme, and he says a few things about it. But what is his—you didn't say anything about his principles of education regarding sex in this early stage. It is not very—I mean it should be mentioned, although it is, of course, not the chief theme of this part.

Student: He tries to avoid obsession with sex.

LS: Well, not merely obsession: he tries to postpone all sexual relations as much as possible; and in this respect he is from today extremely old-fashioned, isn't he? Compared with today, I mean. There are then some very tough stories about this old general of whom he approves, who tried to prevent his son¹ [from getting] out of control, and he brought him to a hospital where people in the last stage of decrepitude from syphilis were shown; and so that was a—this boy learned self-control by this spectacle.^{iv} We cannot go into that, but it is important; I mean, he doesn't teach a lax morality at all. Now, let us begin with a passage on page 173, the third paragraph.

Mr. Reinken: “Our passions are the chief means of self-preservation—”

LS: Are the chief means, let's see. Yeah, all right. I'm sorry.

Mr. Reinken: “to try to destroy them is therefore as absurd as it is useless; this would be to overcome nature, to reshape God's handiwork. If God bade man annihilate the passions he has

ⁱ Referring to the author of the seminar paper, which was not recorded.

ⁱⁱ Strauss leaves out “so to speak.”

ⁱⁱⁱ *E*, 489; 361.

^{iv} *E*, 518; 385.

given him, God would bid him be and not be^v; He would contradict himself. He has never given such a foolish commandment, there is nothing like it written on the heart of man, and what God will have a man do, He does not leave to the words of another man. He speaks Himself; His words are written in the secret heart.”^{vi}

LS: . . . I mean this was, I am sure, perfectly understood at the time; but today it needs some brief commentary to be understood, this remark. What does he say, in plain English?

Student: Forget the Bible.

LS: Yes, sure. But elaborate it a bit. Why?

Student: It is superfluous.

LS: Yeah, but after all, what induces him to allude here to the problem of preservation? Something very simple and crude.

Student: That simple sentiments are guide enough for us?

LS: No ascetic morality. I mean there is a certain—I mean, the word asceticism is used in *n* senses; but no, we can say here this, no ascetic morality. The ascetic moralities are based on revelation, rightly or wrongly understood, and there is no revelation. Because God speaks to us, what God wants us to do he writes at the bottom of our heart; he doesn’t—there is no special revelation. But obviously one cannot leave it simply at the assertion, the passions are good, are natural, because there are bad passions from every point of view. Now, how does he solve that? On the bottom of the same page: “The source of our passions.”

Mr. Reinken: “the root and spring of all the rest, the only one which is born with man, which never leaves him as long as he lives, is self-love; this passion is primitive, instinctive, it precedes all the rest, which are in a sense only modifications of it. In this sense, if you like, they are all natural. But most of these modifications are the result of external influences—”

LS: Wait. No: “have external causes.” External causes. Causes external to man.

Mr. Reinken: “without which they would never occur, and such modifications, far from being advantageous to us, are harmful. They change the original purpose and work against its end; then it is that man finds himself outside nature and at strife with himself.”^{vii}

LS: Yes, now, let us try to understand this: the root of all passions is self-love, concern with self-preservation, and this is of course good. And how is it possible that there can be bad passions? Now, if we assume a simple scheme [LS writes on the Blackboard] like that of Hobbes: self-preservation is good, and pride, equally natural, is bad—equally natural. Rousseau, we can say, gives us here a somewhat more exact interpretation of Hobbes; because how is it intelligible that

^v “God would will and not will.”

^{vi} *E*, 490-91; 362.

^{vii} *E*, 491; 363.

man has by nature one passion which is bad, which contradicts the primary, self-preservation? And one can state this as follows: self-preservation. You need, for that, means of self-preservation. The sum total of means of self-preservation is called power, that is Hobbes's definition of that, power. Now, power becomes relevant only as excess of your power over that of your competitors. Only that excess counts in the fight, not the part which you have in common. So we are—must be concerned with excess of our power over the power of the others. Now, this excess of power does not have to be real: if the other fellow believes that you are more powerful than he, he will act in the same way. This is one of the axioms of foreign politics, especially, you know. But also in private politics it probably plays a role. So, if you are thought to² [have an] excess of power, that's important. I mean, even if you are actually powerful, more powerful, it is still important that you are thought to be more powerful. Read the daily papers about Cuba, and I don't have to labor that point. And what is true of countries is of course true also of individuals in the state of nature. So, there arises then a concern with being recognized as superior by others. But this concern with being recognized as superior can, as it were, become oblivious of its origin, self-preservation. And then it can lead men to become concerned with being regarded as superior and oblivious of self-preservation. And then, of course, *this* pride emerges which is then in contradiction with self-preservation. So, pride has a natural origin; but it is so remote from the natural origin that it can become contradictory to the primary thing. Differently stated, the passions which contradict self-preservation all stem from self-preservation, but some of them contradict self-preservation. So we have then here a distinction—a criterion for distinguishing between good and bad passions which does not require a *telos*, an end, beyond it; because the primary meaning of every passion is self-preservation, a modification of self-preservation. So, this is in a way a criticism of Hobbes, but it is also in a way an interpretation of Hobbes. One must say Hobbes does not make this point clear, but when one knows him somewhat better . . . one sees that this is what Hobbes intended.

Now, let us go on—the paragraph after the next. We read only the beginning and the end:

Mr. Reinken: “Self preservation requires therefore—”

LS: No. “We must then love ourselves in order to preserve ourselves; we must love ourselves more than anything else”^{viii}

Mr. Reinken: “and it follows directly from this that we love what contributes to our preservation.”

LS: Yes; so this is the primary meaning of love: we love whatever is conducive to our self-preservation. This is of course an extremely crude notion of love, but Rousseau says that is the origin of all higher love and we must start from that. And then he makes a distinction between [persons and things]—at the end of this same paragraph.

Mr. Reinken: “Something does us good, we seek after it; but we love the person who does us good; something harms us and we shrink from it, but we hate the person who tries to hurt us.”^{ix}

^{viii} “We must love ourselves more than anything else” is Rousseau's handwritten annotation in the original edition of *Emile*. The annotation can be found on page 1456 of the Pléiade edition.

^{ix} *E*, 492; 363.

LS: No: “who wishes to hurt us”; that doesn’t come out. So, if someone—something is actively beneficial to us—say, that the stone you pick up to hurl at your enemy—you seek it; but if you find an object which *wishes* to help you—and this object is likely to be another human being—then you love it. So, we love whenever we are confronted with something which wishes to help us; and we hate whenever we [we are confronted with something which wishes to harm us]—this is the beginning of the theory of the passions which Rousseau develops.

Student: Does Emile love him who would help him?

LS: That is the basic stratum; that is also in Emile, in every human being. But it is overlaid on the higher levels; we are now beginning at the beginning.

Student: But this implies a gratitude, doesn’t it, which is supposed to be—

LS: We come to gratitude. We are at the most elementary stratum. I mean, the difficulty is beautifully indicated by that passage in Xenophon’s *Oeconomicus* where there occurs the following sentence—let me see whether I can quote it literally: “Men believe to love those by whom they believe to be benefited.”^x The sentence requires a moment of thought, and that was sufficient for some editors to regard the passage as corrupt, and so they omitted one of the two “believes.” But Xenophon knew very well what he was saying: we *believe* to love by what we *believe* to be benefited. That is a simple case of the benefactor in the crudest sense, someone who helped you. He have been—may be a complete gangster, but for some reason or other he benefited you, and then, what Xenophon meant to say, a crude man, an undiscerning man loves him—he doesn’t love him truly; but he believes to love him—and the basis of this belief to love him is that he believes he has been benefited by him. True love does not have this character; that is what Xenophon implies. But Rousseau starts, however, from scratch, from the strictly egoistic morality, as you can see. In page 174 in the fourth paragraph. Yeah, Mr. Butterworth?

Mr. Butterworth: One question: the end of this paragraph is purposely ambiguous, as far as saying—keeping in the idea that it can always be a thing, even, that we hate.

LS: Yes, sure; but later on there is a question, the distinction which we made, and which [a] child—the very young child cannot very well have, but which a child of ten years can easily make, between something which helps him, like a chair, and a thing which wishes to help him, like his mother. So, at the beginning of paragraph 4, page 174.

Mr. Reinken: “So a child is naturally disposed to kindly feeling because he sees that every one about him is inclined to help him, and from this experience he gets the habit of a kindly feeling towards his species.”^{xi}

LS: Let us stop here. A little bit later on in the same paragraph: “The love of oneself which regards only—which considers only oneself.” Do you have that?

^x *Oeconomicus*, 20.28.

^{xi} *E*, 492; 363-63.

Mr. Reinken: “Self-love, which concerns itself only with ourselves, is content to satisfy our own needs—”

LS: “our true needs.”

Mr. Reinken: “but selfishness, which is—”

LS: No, that is *amour-propre*; this never comes out in the translation. I will now use the French word. Those of you who don’t know French well—and we will interpret this while we go. Very roughly, it is the same as Hobbes’s pride; but we must see later. Yes. “But *amour-propre*.”

Mr. Reinken: “but *amour-propre*, which is always comparing self with others, is never satisfied and never can be; for this feeling, which prefers ourselves to others, requires that they should prefer us to themselves.”

LS: You see, in other words, an imposition; it implies an imposition. Self-love merely says I come first for myself; that is not unfair. But if I say *you* should prefer me to yourself, then I am impudent. That’s *amour-propre*. Impudence is of the essence of *amour-propre*. Go on.

Mr. Reinken: “Thus the tender and gentle passions spring from self-love, while the hateful and angry passions spring from *amour-propre*. So it is the fewness of his needs, the narrow limits within which he can compare himself with others, that makes a man really good; what makes him really bad is a multiplicity of needs and dependence on the opinions of others.”^{xii}

LS: Let us stop here, and let us try to understand it. So Rousseau explains here why children are primarily good, benevolent: because they have experienced only human beings who wish to help them. Well, one can say normally that is perhaps the case, but by no means universally, of course. And now he makes a distinction between self-love and *amour-propre*. This *amour-propre* is the source of the hating and irascible passions, i.e. when we are thwarted, the passions connected with our being thwarted. So, *amour-propre* is then akin to what Plato understands by spiritedness; and that is no wonder, because spiritedness as Plato understands it includes love of victory, love of honor, love of superiority. There is surely a kinship here. And this *amour-propre* is fundamentally unjust. This is the first indication of the problem of the whole section we are discussing today.

Now, the question . . . after having laid this foundation, he returns to the primary subject, sexual love, of which he speaks in the sequel. And that is—what he says about it is very simple: there is a desire for the other sex as such which we share with the brutes, and this is not interesting, particularly. The love—the *human* love with which alone he is concerned, human sexual love, is the desire limited *ad hanc*: *this* woman; not *any* woman. Well, anyone who knows dogs—for example, people have very beautiful bitches, and then this magnificent bitch mates with *any* dog, as you know, and that is a very great problem for all dog-owners. [Laughter] . . . You know, that creates something approaching tragedy sometimes. But among human beings, that is extremely rare, that a man should be satisfied with *any* woman, if he can have better ones, whatever he may understand by better. So, the love with which alone he is concerned is this love preferring this

^{xii} E, 493; 364.

woman to others, love *ad hanc*; and this as it implies preferences, because as a rule, men prefer young, beautiful women to old and ugly ones. Exceptions there are; but the rule I only state. Yeah? Good. Now, this means, however, human love includes comparing; therefore human love presupposes *amour-propre*, that is the key point. And therefore the discussion of sexual love is overlaid and almost replaced by the discussion of *amour-propre*. Rousseau has no word to say about the desire or instinct for procreation: that is not even alluded to here. Sexual love is divorced from its natural end; and it is—as you will see on page 180, paragraph 2, beginning—

Mr. Reinken: “The child brought up in accordance with his age—”

LS: Now, let me see . . . here. Yes. Yes.

Mr. Reinken: “is alone. He knows no attachment but that of habit, he loves his sister like his watch, and his friend like his dog.”

LS: So, in other words, there is no—whatever is helpful is loved; whatever is helpful and thought to wish to be helpful—that you can surely say of the dog—is loved. Yes.

Mr. Reinken: “He is unconscious of his sex and his species; men and women are alike unknown; he does not connect their sayings and doings with himself, he neither sees nor hears, or he pays no heed to them; he is no more concerned with their talk than their actions; he has nothing to do with it.”^{xiii}

LS: And so on. Remember, what Rousseau wants to say, to come back to this point—Rousseau—sexual love, to repeat that point, divorced from its natural end: this sexual love is taken to be the source of *all* social feelings, especially of love of superiority. This sounds like Freud, but is not meant that way. Yes?

Student: I have a couple of questions. When you just made that statement, sexual love divorced from its natural end, are you talking about an Aristotelian end?

LS: Yes; well, I would say also a fairly natural notion.³ I mean, for example you find very frequently, perhaps more frequently among girls of marriageable age, the view that they get married in order to become children—⁴in order to, I’m sorry, in order to get children (I don’t know what the German is): in order to get children.⁵ Do you see? I mean—today that is very much taken for granted, as I am given to understand, but normally and ordinarily people know of this: that the sexual relation serves the purpose of procreation.

Student: Modern Protestant theology doesn’t say that that is the only natural end of sexual love . . .

LS: But no. I think that is what men always thought. That is a very great problem, and it is interesting—not so much the moral decay, which in my opinion—which has taken place, but that is not my primary interest here—I am much more interested for the time being in the theoretical premises underlying it; we come to that. I will take this up later.

^{xiii} *E*, 500; 370.

Student: Does he say that *amour-propre* is fundamentally unjust, and in particular—

LS: Ya, no. That will become refined. The first statement—that is always the way in which he proceeds—first he shouts loud, makes a terrible overstatement; and then he qualifies it. Now, first he says *amour-propre* is simply unjust, and now, let us keep this in mind, but it will be qualified. The other thing which he makes now is that sexual love, human love—I say sexual love in order to avoid any possible mistake for charity, or something of this kind—human sexual love is rooted in comparison, i.e. it presupposes *amour-propre*, as he had said already, by the way, in the *Second Discourse*. By the way, empirically, I believe, Rousseau is quite wrong, because children are of course sensible to the difference between beautiful and ugly men and women; but this . . . that doesn't affect the main point of the argument.⁶ But I do not want to—and what he says about the whole question. For example, when he says here on page 178, paragraph 4, “Children have not the same desires as men but [are as] subject as they to the . . . —how do you say “*malpropreté*”?

Mr. Butterworth: Dirtiness.

LS: Dirtiness, or something, which blesses—which hurts the senses.^{xiv} In other words, if a child is as repelled by sheer—by dirty people as grown up people are, this means of course comparison, preference, and so on; I mean, that is clear, this cannot surely be maintained. Now, let us proceed; let us follow the argument—I mean—and take up all the various things which he alludes to. Page 180, in the third paragraph.

Mr. Reinken: “It is the errors of the imagination which transmute into vices the passions of finite beings, of angels even, if indeed they have passions—“

LS: No: “if there are angels,” “*s’il y en a.*”

Mr. Butterworth: No, I don’t think so.

LS: No?

Mr. Butterworth: “if they have of those.”

LS: Then he would say, “*s’ils en ont,*” and not “*s’il y en a.*”

Mr. Butterworth: Well, I have in my text “*s’ils en ont.*”

LS: Oh, well. Amazing. There must be two versions. I didn’t know that.

Mr. Butterworth: Yeah. But you have a better text, because in the note it says, “*s’il y en a.*”

LS: It is a better text? I want to know that.

^{xiv} E, 398; 368.

Mr. Butterworth: Do you want to hear the note?

LS: Yeah. All right. Please.

Mr. Butterworth: “Rousseau in the autographed manuscript had written ‘*s’il y en a.*’ He replaced for the edition this—”

LS: Oh, I see. So in other words, still, in fairness, one would have to take the final version. All right. Thank you. Thank you very much. But still, it is interesting: I mean, he found this too dangerous, and he replaced it.^{xv} Yeah, good. [Inaudible exchange]. *S’il y en a.* Thank you very much. Now, let’s see, at the beginning of 180, paragraph 3. “Do you wish.”

Mr. Reinken: “to establish law and order among the rising passions, prolong the period of their development, so that they may have time to find their proper place as they arise. Then they are controlled by nature herself, not by man; your task is merely to leave it in her hands.”^{xvi}

LS: Yeah, let us see. So, what does the order of nature mean? It is of course an order made possible by man. It is not strictly speaking natural, but according to nature, yeah?—as Aristotle would put it, *kata physen, secundum naturam*,^{xvii} and it is not simply natural. Page 182, paragraph 2, that concerns—we now approach the central passage: “the weakness of man.” Rousseau, you see,⁷ [has] made this first sketch which you will recall: self-preservation—things beneficial to self-preservation and hurtful to it—so, love and hatred in the primary meaning of the terms; that has been explained. But we have now to come to the higher and more interesting stages, and that we do here. Read it.

Mr. Reinken: “Man’s weakness makes him sociable.”

LS: Now, let us see how this is linked up. Man. Self-preservation. Self-preservation: and man realizes sooner or later—rather sooner—that he cannot well preserve himself without the help of others. “Man’s weakness makes him sociable”; not yet social. Primarily, man is not sociable: his needs make him sociable. Yes?

Mr. Reinken: “Our common sufferings draw our hearts to our fellow-creatures; we should have no duties to mankind if we were not men. Every affection is a sign of insufficiency; if each of us had no need of others, we should hardly think of associating with them. So our frail happiness—”^{xviii}

LS: In other words, that is a kind of accident; it is accidental. It is a necessary accident, but it is only an accident, that man becomes social. Man is not by nature social. This is absolutely crucial, and that has never been denied by Rousseau; in spite of all the many contradictions, in this

^{xv} As Kelly notes in his translation, It is also “*s’il y en a*” in corrections Rousseau made for a future edition (750, n. 3).

^{xvi} *E*, 500; 370.

^{xvii} “According to nature.”

^{xviii} *E*, 503; 372.

respect there is no contradiction. And that is the meaning of Rousseau's radical individualism which he shares, of course, with Hobbes and Locke.

Student: Isn't there a problem in even formalizing the issue of the necessary accidents? That accurately describes what it is, but doesn't that make one almost think it is natural?

LS: Yeah, sure; naturally. But the question is, why does Rousseau insist so strongly on this subtle distinction between natural sociality and mere sociability, mere accidental sociability? Because if man is by nature social, then there is a sense at least in which society and even political society is prior to the individual, as Aristotle stated it at the beginning of the *Politics*.^{xix} That means the first fundamental moral phenomena for the individual are duties. He is born into the society and is by nature subject to it; but if he is primarily not social, he enters it freely on the basis of stipulations which—of a contract. Do you see that? That is the practical importance of this seemingly metaphysical distinction—is this clear?—and so it is a very important distinction. May I say one thing for the understanding of usage: you know how they called formerly the Aristotelian doctrine, that man is by nature social, which of course was also shared by the Stoics and some others? Socialistic doctrines, that was the name: man is by nature social. And these doctrines were called the anti-socialist doctrines, which of course is in a narrower sense . . . also true. You know the famous “everyone for himself; God for all of us” in the early free-enterprise philosophy. It is of course in this sense anti-socialistic, do you see that? Now, that was a very great issue around in the seventeenth and eighteenth century, that the modern schools were the anti-socialists. And this was even preserved in a more subtle way in German idealistic philosophy, as appears from a very striking passage in an early writing of Hegel which I have quoted somewhere in *Natural Right and History*; I do not remember it now. You might look it up if you are interested.^{xx} Now, let us go on. Yes?

Mr. Reinken: . . .

LS: No. “Every attachment is a sign of insufficiency; if every one of us didn't need others, we would not dream of uniting ourselves with them. Hence from our very infirmity there arises our frail happiness.” Go on.

Mr. Reinken: “A really happy man is a hermit—.”

LS: No, “a really happy being.”

Mr. Reinken: That makes more sense with the next sentence. “God only enjoys absolute happiness; but which of us has any idea what that means? If any imperfect creature were self-sufficing, what would he have to enjoy? To our thinking he would be wretched and alone. I do not understand how one who has need of nothing could love anything, nor do I understand how he who loves nothing can be happy.”^{xxi}

^{xix} *Politics*, 1253a19.

^{xx} See Leo Strauss, *Natural Right and History* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1953), 279.

^{xxi} *E*, 503; 372.

LS: Yeah. Do you—I mean, this has a very grave implication, which does not refer immediately to our issue; we try to—one thing we see: man is in need of other human beings. Therefore he is sociable, i.e. can be made social. This—and therefore this is the next step he takes in his analysis of the passions. But here he inserts a theological observation: do you see what he says here, almost explicitly?

Student: I don't understand the last sentence.

LS: Which one?

Student: "I do not understand how one who has need of nothing could love anything."

LS: Because all love is based on need. There is only, as it is called in scholastic terminology, an *amor indigentia*, a love stemming from need; there is no other love. And from this it follows necessarily, it seems to me, that God does not love. Yeah? "A truly happy being would be a solitary being," and God is such a solitary being. And then he says, "He who needs nothing"—"I do not conceive how he who needs nothing could love anything." We must keep this in mind when we come to the theological section. But let us see what the consequence is. Mr. Johnson.

Mr. Johnson: . . . if God doesn't love that which he created, nature, is there an alternative, I mean, is there an opposite that I mean nature is something absolutely miserable?

LS: There is another way; I mean for, if we take this seriously: that God needed creation. Yeah? It was a kind of necessity, moral or other et cetera. And perhaps Rousseau has this in mind. But let us see.

Mr. Reinken: Isn't he implying in this string of contradictions that from the human standpoint absolute self-sufficiency is inconceivable as a source of happiness?

LS: Yeah, but let—may I read to you a passage from the *Rêveries du promeneur solitaire*, Number 5, when he speaks of that sentiment of existence? "What does one enjoy in such a situation? Nothing external to oneself, nothing except oneself and one's own existence; as long as this state lasts, one suffices to oneself, like God. The sentiment of existence deprived of every other affection or passion is by itself a precious sentiment of contentment and peace."^{xxii} And so on.

So, in other words, *the* happiness, the beatific vision, as you called it, contains no love, because in this part of his being, and as long as it lasts, man is self-sufficient. So, I think that only confirms what we have been reading here. But this is not—the theological question is not the theme now, although we must keep it in mind when we come to the Profession of the Savoyard Vicar.

Let us see what we learn here about the human passions The next paragraph begins, "It follows from here." In the next paragraph the moral consequences are developed.

^{xxii} Rousseau, 2000, 46.

Mr. Reinken: “Hence it follows that we are drawn towards our fellow-creatures less by our feeling for their joys than for their sorrows; for in them we discern more plainly a nature like our own, and a pledge of their affection for us. If our common needs create a bond of interest our common sufferings create a bond of affection. The sight of a happy man arouses in others envy rather than love, we are ready to accuse him of usurping a right which is not his, of seeking happiness for himself alone, and our selfishness—”

LS: *Amour-propre*, ya.

Mr. Reinken: “suffers an additional pang in the thought that this man has no need of us. But who does not pity the wretch when he beholds his sufferings? Who would not deliver him from his woes if a wish could do it? Imagination puts us more readily in the place of the miserable man than of the happy man; we feel that the one condition touches us more nearly than the other. Pity is sweet, because, when we put ourselves in the place of one who suffers, we are aware, nevertheless, of the pleasure of not suffering like him. Envy is bitter, because the sight of a happy man, far from putting the envious in his place, inspires him with regret that he is not there. The one seems to exempt us from the pains he suffers, the other seems to deprive us of the good things he enjoys.”^{xxiii}

LS: Now, let us first remind ourselves of the place in the argument: so we have somehow understood in a very crude way the emergence of love and hatred in the most primitive sense from self-preservation. And now Rousseau offers an account of the higher forms, of the human forms, of the truly human forms of love. This . . . is called by Rousseau—this highest form of love for mankind, for man as man—⁸“pity,” or “compassion”; and we must not—that is the great theme here. The problem of pity is here in this context identical with the problem of human morality. And we must see whether we can disentangle that.

Now,⁹ one thing is made clear right from the beginning: Rousseau knows another basis of morality to which he alludes, and that is what he calls interest, or calculation. Calculation can induce a man to behave reasonably well—honesty is the best policy. And Rousseau knows that; and young Emile, prior to the present stage had such a calculating morality. That has been made clear in the preceding section. But Rousseau knows that a calculating morality is not good enough: we must have a genuine morality; and this genuine morality he means by pity or compassion. Now, I think it is clear already here—and this will be made fully clear in the sequel—that compassion as Rousseau understands it includes a feeling of superiority: I am better off. By the way, that is, I think, one of the most loathsome things in many phenomena called pity or compassion: one observes sometimes people who rush to the miserable, and simple people are deceived and think, well, they have such a good heart. No: they enjoy their superiority there, and not elsewhere. Now—but Rousseau is—can be a bit— coarse-grained in this point. And so there is a feeling: he who cannot sympathize as much with the other’s happiness cannot sympathize with his unhappiness; that would seem to be a more human view. Yeah? I mean, if man is truly sympathetic, capable of fellow-feeling, this should extend to the happiness of his fellows as much as to their unhappiness. But Rousseau regards it . . . as impossible that one can share

^{xxiii} E, 503-4; 373.

another man's happiness and be happy about it.^{xxiv} It comes more natural to us to suffer vicariously with the other's unhappiness. Mr. Schrock.

Mr. Schrock: I was just going to say that this passage could have been taken from Hobbes: Hobbes defines pity as the imagination of a like calamity occurring to oneself.

LS: But one thing, Mr. Schrock: whatever Hobbes may say about pity, he doesn't make pity the mainstay of morality. Is this not fair? Yeah. No, Hobbes's morality is a strictly calculating one, and the passionate basis is fear of violent death.

Mr Schrock: . . . Well, the pity is sort of deduced from this passion—

LS: Yeah. But it doesn't become the mainstay of morality. And we come back to Hobbes; there will be even—be an explicit—an almost explicit polemics against Hobbes in the sequel. Now, let us look at a few more passages which refer—I will only take the most important. Yes.

Student: Is this a similar view to Hume?^{xxv}

LS: Sure.¹⁰ . . . ya, sure. I believe the origin of the whole thing, but without this particular sentimentality, is, as far as I can see, in Spinoza. The same—the fundamental problem is the same: how can you get a genuine morality on the basis of the fundamental egoism; that is the question for all these people. And Spinoza's argument is very roughly this: of course I feel elated if I am happy; and I feel dejected if I am unhappy. Good. Now, if I see another fellow happy, what are my reactions? On the one hand, maybe envy that he is happy and I am not; on the other hand, there is, however, since I know how good happiness does, there is something which Hume is going to call association of ideas: his happiness reminds me of my happiness, and so I can sympathize with it. The same applies, of course, also to the unhappiness of the others. Spinoza calls this imitations of affections.^{xxvi} He does not yet speak of association of ideas, but the phenomenon is fundamentally the same. In other words, on the basis of a strictly egoistic and mechanistic psychology, people like Spinoza and Hume prior to Rousseau tried to establish something like a non-egoistic morality. That is, I think, the background. Rabbi Weiss.

Rabbi Weiss: I think, though, that Hume would disagree with Rousseau and Spinoza in that he doesn't think that you necessarily envy those who are better off than you, but you may just feel well-disposed toward them, as you suggested earlier.

LS: Ya. I do not remember now the details, but I was only speaking of the general structure of the reasoning. So, the question is, to repeat—the question is how can you build on an egoistic, mechanistic psychology something like a so-called altruistic morality. This was the problem

^{xxiv} However, Emile, who has been raised so that he envies no one, is “delighted by the image of happiness” (*E*, 545; 407).

^{xxv} That is, the view that morality is grounded in compassion. For a discussion of the relationship between sympathy (which should be distinguished from compassion) and morality, see Hume's *Treatise on Human Nature*, Book 3, Part 3.

^{xxvi} *Ethics*, Part 4, P27.

common to these three men. That is the only point in which I am now interested. Let us look at page 184, the second paragraph.

Mr. Reinken: “So pity is born, the first relative sentiment—”

LS: Now, what does relative mean here? He had spoken earlier—and will speak later—of self-preservation as an absolute sentiment. Relative is understood in opposition to the absoluteness of self-preservation. It has no relation to others. Relative has relation to others Go on.

Mr. Reinken: “sentiment which touches the human heart according to the order of nature. To become sensitive and pitiful the child must know that he has fellow-creatures who suffer as he has suffered, who feel the pains he has felt, and others which he can form some idea of, being capable of feeling them himself. Indeed, how can we let ourselves be stirred by pity unless we go beyond ourselves, and identify ourselves with the suffering animal, by leaving, so to speak, our own nature and taking his. We only suffer so far as we suppose he suffers; the suffering is not ours but his. So no one becomes sensitive till his imagination is aroused and begins to carry him outside himself.”^{xxvii}

LS: Into others. This “outside of himself,” that means exactly the same that *amour-propre* means: to be transported outside of yourself beyond yourself. In a word, compassion is a modification of *amour-propre*. *Amour-propre*, as it were, divides the two branches: one is pity, and the other is glory. That is what he is driving at. To see the peculiarity of Rousseau’s teaching, let us go back to its principle: all love is founded in need. Does this mean that we are—does this necessarily lead to the consequence that we are more attracted by men in need than by men without need?

[Inaudible exchange]

Student: It has to be. . . .

LS: Do you agree with that?

Student: If you need a handout, go to the rich.

LS: Obviously. That is on the simplest level, but since we also have other needs, I mean, where the rich in money would not be able to help us. But generally stated, if all love is founded in need, it does *not* follow that we are more attracted by men in need than by men without need. We might precisely be attracted by the men who can help us. This is exactly the Platonic argument, up to a certain level: when, say, Glaucon is attracted by Socrates. Glaucon is a man in need. Socrates can fulfill the need. And so in this connection, something else—passions arise which Rousseau depreciates, like admiration, like emulation. This is the entire theme of the—you know the foreignness of this doctrine to the Platonic and also Aristotelian doctrine is quite striking; and we must make this absolutely clear. The directly opposite conclusion was drawn by the classic philosophers.

^{xxvii} *E*, 506; 374.

Now, we have to raise this question now: why this emphasis on pity? Now, the emphasis on passion in general we understand: this is based on the principle long—already established long before and will be repeated by Rousseau here, that reason is not enough; reason is powerless. So, the basis of morality can only be a passion. That was in no way new; but why the emphasis on the passion of pity?

Mr. Butterworth: . . . How are you using the term?

LS: Passion; I use it here synonymously with sentiment. So, the starting point in the argument here is calculation: we calculate that we are better off if we are nice to our fellows, in the service of self-preservation. But calculation is not good enough, not strong enough, not deep enough. Which affection, which passion can make men friendly to other men? This is surely present in Rousseau's argument, but it is not the whole story, as we see when we turn to page 184, the third paragraph, the paragraph immediately following.

Mr. Reinken: "What should we do to stimulate and nourish this growing sensibility, to direct it, and to follow its natural bent? Should we not present to the young man objects on which the expansive force of his heart may take effect, objects which dilate it, which extend it to other creatures, which take him outside himself? Should we not carefully remove everything that narrows, concentrates, and strengthens the power of the human self? That is to say, in other words, we should arouse in him kindness, goodness, pity, and beneficence, all the gentle and attractive passions—"

LS: You see, if you have any doubt, Mr. Butterworth: passions. Yes?

Mr. Reinken: "which are naturally pleasing to man; those passions prevent the growth of envy, covetousness, hatred, all the repulsive and cruel passions which make our sensibility not merely a cipher but a minus quantity, passions which are the curse of those who feel them."^{xxviii}

LS: You see, we have to state the question which Rousseau answers here, somewhat differently. He is seeking for an affection which is pleasant, sweet, *and* pleasing to others. Now, if you take envy, even emulation, and desire for glory, these are not simply sweet passions, because they have also a nagging character; and they are surely not necessarily pleasing to the others. They are surely displeasing to all competitors. But pity has this unique quality: that it is pleasing to the pitier, and pleasing to the observer. Pity has no sting for him who has pity, at least as Rousseau understands it; and Rousseau does not think of someone who genuinely suffers from seeing that man in misery, but he has a feeling of his own goodness. You know, he feels fine. So pity has no sting for him who has pity, *and* for the observer, and *hopefully* for the sufferer—because that there can be people who hate being pitied is not taken into consideration . . . So what he has in mind, if pity meets his conditions, it is indeed a wonderful passion: pleasant for the pitier, pleasant for the pitied, and pleasant for the observer. And that is a unique passion, and it should really be boosted, by all means. Mr. McAtee.

Mr. McAtee: I don't know if this is the place for the question I would like to raise, a general question.

^{xxviii} E, 506; 375.

LS: A gentle question?

Mr. McAtee: A general one.

LS: Yeah, go ahead.

Mr. McAtee: A general question.

LS: Oh.

Mr. McAtee: Not quite so gentle. The idea of Aristotle's notion of tragedy: of exciting the emotions or feelings of pity and of fear with a view to cleansing the soul. Does Rousseau—let me see if I can find my way—

LS: Let me first try to answer. Aristotle does not admire pity. That a man who is insensitive to the sufferings of others is a barbarian, or savage, goes without saying. But this does not yet mean to boost pity. Pity is an affection which, at the right place, to the right people, is becoming; but it must be controlled by reason, absolutely. And in addition in the case of tragedy, tragedy is meant to purify pity, not to coddle it.

Mr. McAtee: Does Rousseau have something like that in mind?

LS: Ya. Of course he *sees* that, that pity is not such a thing which can be entirely in control, which must be rationally treated. But we start now from the beginning, from the fact that pity acquires such a tremendous place. Now, regarding Aristotle and tragedy, one little thing: a pupil of Rousseau, Lessing, a German writer, interpreted Aristotle's theory of tragedy, say, ten years after that.^{xxix} And what did he do? He—Aristotle had spoken of the purification of pity and fear, and Lessing says, forget about fear; pity, with the understanding that being compassionate is identical with being good. That shows you the difference between the Aristotelian theory of tragedy and what is implied in Rousseau . . . pity is not competitive—I mean, of course, we see even in these spurious cases of these people who try to help, you know, in order to feel better, that there is some competition among them; I have observed such cases—but in the better case, it is not competitive, as love for glory or victory is, and on the other hand it is also not exclusive, as sexual love is: two human beings. It can extend to *any* human being, that is the point.

Now, in the sequel Rousseau establishes or states three maxims—pages 184 to 187—and which—they deal with fellow-feeling *regarding* the rich and the poor, and *of* the rich and the poor. In other words, the forms of happiness and unhappiness considered are only those of the rich and the poor, which is, I mean, a very narrow view of human happiness and unhappiness; after all, there are other sufferings than those going with poverty. We will come back to that later. In other words, he doesn't take into consideration health, having good or bad children, and the other elements of happiness of which we of course have to think. And the point which he makes is this: there is no—I use the old word fellow-feeling in order to have in mind both the feeling for the happiness of others and for the unhappiness of the others—so, there is no fellow-

^{xxix} Lessing, *Hamburg Dramaturgy* (1767-69), Ch. 77.

feeling for the rich but for the poor; and there is no fellow-feeling of the rich, but only of the poor. That is the result of these three maxims; that is real dynamite. We see here clearly the connection with the boosting of pity and democracy.

END OF TAPE SIDE ONE.

[in progress] **LS:** —and if you have any doubt, read the chapter in Tocqueville's *Democracy in America*, where he speaks of the importance of pity and self-interest as the guiding motives in a democracy.^{xxx} By the way, you must beware of one mistake in reading Tocqueville. De Tocqueville was of course in a way a very good observer; but he came to this country with a theory of democracy in his mind, and you can—all the categories which he develops can all be found in Rousseau. In other words, a man who had formed a picture of democracy, on the basis of the greatest theoretician of democracy by that time, came here and he found the facts corresponded. Now, the facts *may* have corresponded—that is a long question—but one must never forget the power of this preconception with which Tocqueville approached the phenomenon. And therefore in a way Tocqueville is not an independent source; this is what I wanted to make clear. That would require a close study. Let us look at page 186, paragraph 4.

Mr. Reinken: “The people are mankind; those who do not belong to the people are so few in number that they are not worth counting. Man is the same in every station of life; if that be so, those ranks to which most men belong deserve most honor.”^{xxxi}

LS: Ya, “most respect,” he says. Now this is, of course, crucial. Now—but again¹¹—does it follow? Under what conditions does it follow? We must respect man as man, sure; but does it mean—under what conditions does it follow that we must respect the largest number more than the smaller? Only on the assumption of equality of all men; you know, equality in all important respects. This I think shows the reason—in the next paragraph. Ya, and here in the next paragraph—that is crucial, because there he defends—he has to defend his novel position against the traditional philosophic view, the view of the Stoics, of Plato, of Aristotle,¹² which was, to repeat, that passion—compassion is a passion, and therefore absolutely in need of rational control. The Stoics went so far to say men must be free from passions¹³ and therefore from pity in particular, which doesn't mean that they recommended cruelty, because that would also be an opposite passion. And of course when they spoke about misery and happiness, they had a broad view; they did not limit themselves to a certain kind of happiness which kind—or unhappiness, which kind we can define after having read the next paragraph. Mr. Reinken?

Mr. Reinken: “There is, so our sages^{xxxii} tell us—”

LS: Yes, now “our sages,” he means, of course, in the first place some of his contemporaries with whom he disagrees, *les philosophes*. He means, however, *also* the teaching of the universities, although they—he despises these professors, but still, they had at that time still a certain reputation, naturally: professors always have a reputation as long as they live—or as long

^{xxx} *Democracy in America*, Volume 3, Part 3, Chapter 1.

^{xxxi} *E*, 509; 377.

^{xxxii} Mr. Reinken departs from the Foxley, which has “wiseacres.” The French is “*nos sages*.”

as they have not retired, I should have said. But he means *also* the whole tradition, as will become clear from what we read. Ya, now read.

Mr. Reinken: “so our sages tell us, the same amount of happiness and sorrow in every station. This saying is as deadly in its effects as it is incapable of proof;—”

LS: No: “untenable,” he says. Untenable.

Mr. Reinken: “if all are equally happy why should I trouble myself about any one?”

LS: This is, of course, a nasty argument. No one said that all men are equally happy, but they said happiness—and unhappiness—doesn’t depend on social status; something very different. You know, in other words, he accuses all other thinkers prior to him of hard-heartedness.¹⁴ Go on.

Mr. Reinken: “Let every one stay where he is; leave the slave to be ill-treated, the sick man to suffer, and the wretched to perish; they have nothing to gain by any change in their condition. You enumerate the sorrows of the rich, and show the vanity of his empty pleasures; what barefaced sophistry! The rich man’s sufferings do not come from his position, but from himself alone when he abuses it.”

LS: Now, listen: and think of the famous figures in Greek tragedies and other stories—you know, the story of Niobe, or whatever it may be, or of Priam of Troy—did he bring this about by his folly, as the rich man who acquires an odious disease because he eats and drinks too much? It is absurd. Now, let us see what he is driving at.

Mr. Reinken: “He is not to be pitied were he indeed more miserable than the poor, for his ills are of his own making, and he could be happy if he chose. But the sufferings—”

LS: Mind you, every rich man—I mean, not in the sophisticated sense of happiness; a Stoic sense; [I mean] a very crude sense—a rich man can be perfectly happy: it depends entirely on him. And the poor man cannot be happy: it does not depend on him. What a notion of happiness. Let us see what he means.

Mr. Reinken: “But the sufferings of the poor man come from external things —”

LS: “from the things.” “From the”—why external? “From the things”; not from him.

Mr. Reinken: “from the hardships fate has imposed upon him. No amount of habit can accustom him to the bodily ills of fatigue, exhaustion, and hunger.”

LS: No. “of the physical sentiment of fatigue, exhaustion, hunger.” Yes. Good.

Mr Reinken: “Neither head nor heart can serve to free him from the sufferings of his condition.”

LS: Ya. Condition in the sense of his social condition, although the word isn't yet—“*de son état*.” Only the next sentence.

Mr. Reinken: “How is Epictetus the better for knowing beforehand that his master will break his leg for him?”^{xxxiii}

LS: Ya, let us stop here. Do you know something about Epictetus? I mean, only the most general things. He was happy as a slave; he was a famous Stoic philosopher.^{xxxiv} So the . . . In other words, Epictetus stands for the principle that happiness and unhappiness has nothing to do with social status, or economic status. That may be a bad principle, according to the view of many contemporaries, but he surely is not a good example here. Now, what, then, does Rousseau have in mind?¹⁵ Philosophy can take care of the misery of the rich. In other words, in this sense the rich man's unhappiness is his own fault. He can sit down, read Epicurus—Epictetus and Seneca about the bearing of pain. And he—sure, he sits there; his valet brings him his tea, or whatever he needs; and he reads this sitting down quietly, and he has all the leisure to comfort himself; and when his children die, and all that—nothing. But the poor man cannot sit down and study and comfort himself. Philosophy can take care of the misery of the rich; but not of the misery of the poor. That misery of the poor is bodily, as he has said here. But one can say, what about the bodily misery of the sick rich man? After all, these terrible diseases are not the privilege of the poor. Now here, Rousseau implies—but, [the poor man in pain] is [tormented] not [primarily] by the pain and the disease inflicted by nature, but by his status: unhappiness stemming from status is the only one where philosophy is impotent. Now, why is misery caused by status, by inferiority of status, worse than all other misery? That is a central part of Rousseau's teaching regarding pity. And I have only one answer: on the basis of *amour-propre*. I mean, you—man's vanity doesn't suffer from the fact necessarily that he gets a mortal disease; but when he sees other people don't have this kind of misery, yeah? Then he says, why should I be a member of a chain gang and these people sit at cocktail parties and in night clubs and other beautiful places? It is very interesting to see that Rousseau does not yet say—does not yet—as his successors were going to say, that these evils are so terrible because they are avoidable; because in an affluent society no one needs to have these physical sentiments of fatigue, exhaustion, and hunger. Now, in other words, Rousseau's doctrine of pity is absolutely crucial, cannot be properly understood except in connection with his democratic tendency as he understood democracy.

Let me state it differently and to make—one must always think of the classical doctrines, in the first place to see some alternative, because many of these things have become a matter of course for us and we do not see a problem in them any more. The classical view was: the title to political power—the right to vote is of course a title to political power—must be some excellence. That makes sense. One excellence is the quality of being a free man in contradistinction to a slave. Now, Aristotle makes it clear in his *Politics* that the free man—that the mainstays of the democracy are the poor^{xxxv}—which doesn't mean paupers, but people who have to earn a living. These many who wanted to have the say did not¹⁶ base their claim on their poverty, but on the fact that they are freemen, and this¹⁷ leads to the consequence that whereas

^{xxxiii} *E*, 590-10; 377-78.

^{xxxiv} Active in the first and second centuries C.E.

^{xxxv} *Politics*, 1279b11-1280a6.

oligarchy, where the title is based on wealth, excludes the poor from participation in political rule, democracy cannot exclude the rich from participation in political rule—because the title is not poverty, but being a freeman; and the rich are as much freemen as the poor. Do you see that? So much is ancient democracy based on the principle that the title to rule must be an excellence and not a defect. Now, here, in modern times, this is somehow no longer as evident; and one could state, slightly exaggerating, in modern times the title to political power can be a defect: the suffering. People who—the very fact that they suffer must give them a title to participate in rule, because that is the only way in which they can take care of their sufferings; say, via social legislation, and so on. But if pity is the virtue of the poor, and pity is such an outstanding, the outstanding passion, poverty is even practically identical with an excellence. The good people—good in the sense of compassionate people—are the poor. That this is, of course, empirically untrue and so on, that goes without saying. It is a prejudice; but without understanding the power of this, one will never understand Rousseau's teaching regarding compassion.

Now this much—let us remind ourselves of the context. The context is this: Rousseau wishes to build up compassion or pity in *Emile* before the other forms of *amour-propre* can come into their own; because this is—if compassion is such a powerful thing in him, then¹⁸ [when] the desire for glory comes in later,¹⁹ it cannot make a great dent in this basic stratum.

²⁰We must now make big jumps. At the bottom of page 193, you find a reference to body and soul as two *substances*.^{xxxvi} This must be kept in mind for the metaphysical discussion which we take up next time.

Page 195, the third paragraph:

Mr. Reinken: “Ingratitude—“

LS: Because gratitude came up; someone brought it up. Here is the discussion.

Mr. Reinken: “would be rarer if kindness were less often the investment of a usurer. We love those who have done us a kindness; what a natural feeling! Ingratitude is not to be found in the heart of man but self—”

LS: Listen! Ingratitude is not to be found in the heart of man. Yes.

Mr. Reinken: “but self-interest is there; those who are ungrateful for benefits received are fewer than those who do a kindness for their own ends. If you sell me your gifts, I will haggle over the price; but if you pretend to give, in order to sell later on at your own price, you are guilty of fraud; it is the free gift which is beyond price. The heart is a law to itself; if you try to bind it, you lose it; give it its liberty, and you make it your own.”

LS: Next paragraph:

Mr. Reinken: “When the fisherman baits his line, the fish come round him without suspicion; but when they are caught on the hook concealed in the bait, they feel the line tighten and they try

^{xxxvi} *E*, 519; 385.

to escape. Is the fisherman a benefactor? Is the fish ungrateful? Do we find a man forgotten by his benefactor, unmindful of that benefactor? On the contrary, he delights to speak of him, he cannot think of him without emotion; if he gets a chance of showing him, by some unexpected service, that he remembers what he did for him, how delighted he is to satisfy his gratitude; what a pleasure it is to earn the gratitude of his benefactor. How delightful to say, "It is my turn now." This is indeed the teaching of nature; a good deed never caused ingratitude."^{xxxvii}

LS: Ya. There is, of course, a certain²¹ extent to which Rousseau is perfectly right: if someone helps another in the expectation that the other shows gratitude, there is a certain questionable character about the genuine character of the gift. And what Rousseau says here, that the only way to help other people is to forget that one has helped them²²—to that extent I think he simply states what is true. And he is quite right, that there are many cases of so-called ingratitude which refer to actions which do not deserve gratitude; but on the other hand, the extreme statement that ingratitude does not find a place in the human heart—that is an illustration of the general statement man is by nature good—shows to which extremes he is going in this connection. Here we see the connection, by the way, between the proposition, man is by nature good, as Rousseau means it, and his emphasis on pity; for it is hard to pity men in general if they are bad, i.e. if they seem to deserve their misery. So, that goes together. But regarding the question of gratitude, are there no men who cannot stand the feeling that they are obliged to anyone, and on this score will never show gratitude, even in any case? Or is—differently stated, is the desire for superiority which contradicts the willingness²³ to be grateful not also a natural sentiment? This is the whole difficulty. Crucial for the whole understanding of Rousseau is what we read on page 196 in the third paragraph.

Mr. Reinken: "We have reached the moral order at last—"

LS: No. Ya. "We enter at last the moral order." Now we—this was all in a way preparatory, the analysis of pity. No. Yes.

Mr. Reinken: "we have just taken the second step towards manhood. If this were the place for it, I would try to show how the first impulses of the heart give rise to the first stirrings of conscience and how from the feelings of love—"

LS: You see how much we have to forget what he said about the innate character of a feeling of injustice—of justice at the very beginning. This²⁴ is of no practical importance. Now we come to that.

Mr. Reinken: "and how from the feelings of love and hatred spring"—from them spring—"the first notions of good and evil."

LS: Ya, this we have already seen before. Ya.

Mr. Reinken: "I would show that justice and kindness are no—"

LS: "and goodness."

^{xxxvii} E, 521-22; 387-88.

Mr. Reinken: “goodness are no mere abstract terms, no mere moral conceptions framed by the understanding, but true affections of the heart enlightened by reason—”

LS: “of the soul.”

Mr. Reinken: “of the soul enlightened by reason, the natural outcome of our primitive affections; that by reason alone, unaided by conscience, we cannot establish any natural law, and that all natural right is a vain dream if it does not rest upon some instinctive need of the human heart.”^{xxxviii}

LS: “some need natural to the human heart.” Ya, but—good. But Rousseau says, I don’t have to elaborate my doctrine. He leaves it at that. Now, let us try to understand that. Also in the note here, where he speaks of the conscience and the sentiment in opposition to reason as the basis of natural law: Rousseau is looking for a new foundation of natural law. We have seen this already in the *Second Discourse*, do you remember? Now, who said that natural law has no foundation except reason? Who said that?

Student: Hobbes?

LS: Exactly. So to speak, no one but Hobbes—Locke, too. The natural law consists of theories or conclusions which acquire a power only by virtue of the establishment of civil society. The Thomistic doctrine is that the natural law is based on the natural inclinations; based on natural inclinations, and not simply on reason.^{xxxix} Now, to some extent, Rousseau seems to oppose Hobbes and to go back to the older Thomistic view, when he says [that] natural law must be based on *need*, on a natural need; but that is not quite the same as what Thomas Aquinas meant. It must be based on need, on natural need, on sentiment, on the force of an expansive soul. Compliance with the natural law must have this character of a sentiment. Now, what is the true difference between Thomas Aquinas and Rousseau here? What is the true difference?

Student: Reason is involved for Thomas Aquinas.

LS: Yes; in other words, the simple opposition of conscience and reason is surely Rousseau’s thing. But the principle, I think, is this: the whole doctrine of natural inclinations—in Greek *horme*—is based on the notion that there is such a thing as the soul, or more generally, the animate body. Rousseau talks of the soul, too, I know that; but it means something absolutely different. And what is the difference? At the beginning of modern times there was a man whom one can never forget, although he is rarely mentioned here. I write the name on the blackboard, because it is absolutely decisive: Descartes. And one can say what Descartes did is very simple: he threw out the soul. He spoke of the soul; but it did no longer mean what it meant before. Descartes says, there is this fundamental distinction [LS writes on the blackboard]: extension and cogitation. You can replace this by matter . . . that is irrelevant to our present context. Matter and cogitation, matter and thought—in the widest sense, where of course every memory and every affection would also be a kind of thought. What does this mean? The practical meaning is

^{xxxviii} E, 522-23; 388-89.

^{xxxix} Aquinas, *Summa Theologica*, 1a, 2ae, 91.2, 94.2-3.

animals are machines; there is no life in between the inanimate and the mind, the consciousness. Differently stated, and to come back to present-day terms, there is no unconscious. Only what is conscious, is cogitation, is, quote, “soul.”^{xi} Therefore there cannot be natural inclinations which are inclinations of the whole being, of man, or also of an animal—the whole being not merely [a part] —[any inclination] which affects him undividedly, so to speak, as a whole being. And therefore there are sentiments, conscious acts, no inclinations. And this has of course something to do also with what we discussed earlier about the problem of potency and act, that there cannot be faculties strictly speaking. On page 197, paragraph 2 . . . ya. Read that please.

Mr. Reinken: “Hitherto my Emile has thought only of himself, so his first glance at his equals leads him to compare himself with them; and the first feeling excited by this comparison is the desire to be first.”

LS: So in a way—ya, go on.

Mr. Reinken: “It is here that self-love is transformed into *amour-propre*, and this is the starting point of all the passions which spring from *amour-propre*.”

LS: So, that comes in only with the stage of puberty, yeah? Say 15, 16 years or so. Yes.

Mr. Reinken: “But to determine whether the passions by which his life—”

LS: No, no: “whether those of these passions.”

Mr. Reinken: “whether those of these passions by which his life will be governed shall be humane and gentle or harsh and cruel, whether they shall be the passions of benevolence and pity or those of envy and covetousness, we must know what he believes his place among men to be.”^{xli}

LS: Let us stop here. So, *amour-propre* is here explicitly said to be the root of *both* compassion and glory. Absolutely important. So that only confirms what we have sensed before; but considering the connection between pity and the conscience, we will be compelled, I believe, to add that the conscience as Rousseau understands it is also a modification of *amour-propre*.

Then he turns to the question how Emile can get the indispensable knowledge of human misery and wickedness without coming to hate the human race. And the answer is history; reading of history. And he raises the question, which historians [should Emile read]; and the winner is Plutarch. Plutarch, because Plutarch does not merely describe battles and victories and diplomatic affairs, but he speaks also of the private life of the heroes, and he gives here a nice example of a French general, Turenne, how humanely he behaved to one of his valets.^{xlii} We cannot read that; this is a subordinate issue. Mr. Butterworth.

^{xi} Descartes, 1998, 19, 31-33. See also *Meditations on First Philosophy*, in Descartes, 1998, Second Meditation, 63-69, Sixth Meditation, 96.

^{xli} *E*, 523; 389.

^{xlii} *E*, 530-32; 395-6.

Mr. Butterworth: Is there any importance in this commentary on Thucydides, saying that Thucydides only reports facts?

LS: No; well, of course not.

Mr. Butterworth:

LS: No, no, no. Of no interest. I believe it is of no interest. I mean—

Mr. Butterworth: I mean, but the facts. Do you think that this is what he really believed in?

LS: No, I mean one could—I regard it as possible; but I would say it is not of any interest. We don't learn anything about Thucydides from that, and we don't learn anything about Rousseau from it. You know, because it is not as—that has to do—after all, this book is *also* meant to be a manual for education, in a way, or a guide for education, and then he says, what kind of histories should adolescents read? And then in this connection he says, Thucydides, yes; but Plutarch, better. That's his decision, which, from a pedagogical point of view, is of course defensible. But I believe that no adolescent could understand either Thucydides *or* Plutarch. But to read him, by all means.

Student: I had thought that compassion was in man prior to his coming into society, and was in man by nature, so to speak.

LS: Yes, sure.

Student: And yet here we find that it stems from *amour-propre*, which—

LS: Now I—yes; you think, of course, primarily of the *Second Discourse*. But I think—I do not believe generally, academically—I don't believe in monographs of this kind; because I think one must not take a doctrine of an author from the context within which he presents it—it is always dangerous—but still, I think a monographic study of Rousseau's doctrine of pity from the very beginning, up to and including the *Emile*, could be helpful. I mean, I, for example, would be glad if I had a statement in front of me—a reliable statement—in which the whole teaching of Rousseau regarding pity in the various stages were presented. Surely the pity has changed, at least explicitly has changed very radically from the *Second Discourse*, and this is much more detailed and profound. But from the very beginning there was, as it were, the urge in him to make pity *the* root of all human goodness; that is true. But this is doubtless much more authoritative than the *Second Discourse*, which is only a very rough sketch; and here it is developed. Mr. Boyan.

Mr. Boyan: I'm wondering if this problem can be solved by distinguishing between compassion and pity.

LS: Between?

Mr. Boyan: Compassion and pity.

LS: Yes, but he doesn't do that. He doesn't do that.

Student: But he does use different words.

LS: Yes, but he uses them synonymously. I mean, and I don't believe that this would affect the principle even if one could make some distinction between various kinds of compassion; this would not affect the basic issue that here, in contradistinction with the *Second Discourse* [the development of pity in *Emile* is intermingled with the development of *amour-propre*, rather than being there in man from the beginning]. At least [in contradistinction to] to the explicit teaching of the *Second Discourse*; there are certain ambiguities there—but in some writings published shortly after the *Second Discourse*, moral writings, he retracts the teaching of the *Second Discourse*, or at least the apparent teaching of the *Second Discourse*, regarding the pity of natural man, completely.^{xliii}

Student:

LS: The natural pity of natural man completely. And you must not forget, when you read carefully the *Second Discourse*, what is that pity in the first stage? The feeling which a horse has if it shies when confronted with the corpse of another horse.^{xliv} That's not exactly what we mean by pity. Ya? So, I think the true—the full doctrine of Rousseau regarding pity comes out here. Let us turn now to page 205, bottom, because that is also of general importance.

Mr. Reinken: "It is not philosophers who know most about men; they only view them through the preconceived ideas of philosophy, and I know no one so prejudiced as philosophers. A savage would judge us more sanely. The philosopher is aware of his own vices, he is indignant at ours, and he says to himself, 'We are all bad alike;' the savage beholds us unmoved and says, 'You are mad.' He is right, for no one does evil for evil's sake. My pupil is that savage, with this difference: Emile has thought more, he has compared ideas, seen our errors at close quarters, he is more on his guard against himself, and only judges of what he knows."^{xlv}

LS: Ya, so what—of course, what Rousseau ascribes to the savage is the philosophic view. I mean, the philosophers were precisely the men who were inclined more to speak of human folly than of wickedness—²⁵Socrates: all vice is ignorance, folly. And much more important is the fact that he indicates here what he has never said so clearly before, that the savages proper, in contradistinction to that noble savage, Emile, have prejudices. That is not explicitly said, but clearly implied: he judges only—Emile judges only of what he knows; the savages judge of things of which they know nothing. This confirms only what we have said before. And the question which arises at this stage: after he has such a wonderful paragon of an adolescent, there is of course a very great danger that he is proud, because he is such a sage, you know, and does nothing wrong and so—and especially so compassionate—and he sees how beastly all other men of his age are, and he feels superior. Something must be done to prevent it: [a] long story along

^{xliii} See note 7 to session 4.

^{xliv} *SD*, 154; 36.

^{xlv} *E*, 535; 399.

the lines of that which happened when he was younger with this fellow at the fair, you know, where he believed that he can do this miracle—what was it, with a duck²⁶.

Student: On the pond.

LS: Ya, the duck and the magnet [laughing]. Ya. Let us turn to page 210, the third paragraph.

Mr. Reinken: “It is not, however, my intention that these maxims should be explained, nor even formulated. Nothing is so foolish and unwise—”

LS: Well, ya. In other words, here he speaks of the use of fables. You remember he criticized earlier the practice to let the small children read the fables of La Fontaine, and where the poet speaks of vices and things of which a child cannot possibly know anything. And now in this stage, he should—after having studied history, he should study the fables, ya. Go on.

Mr. Reinken: “Nothing is so foolish and unwise as the moral at the end of most of the fables; as if the moral was not, or ought not to be so clear in the fable itself that the reader cannot fail to perceive it. Why then add the moral at the end, and so deprive him of the pleasure of discovering it for himself? The art of teaching consists in making the pupil wish to learn. But if the pupil is to wish to learn, his mind must not remain in such a passive state with regard to what you tell him that there really is nothing for him to do but listen to you. The master's vanity must always give way to the scholars. He must be able to say—”^{xlvi}

LS: Not “the vanity.” He says, “It is necessary that the *amour-propre* of the master leaves always some room for the *amour-propre* of the” So, in other words, *amour-propre* is absolutely necessary, [which] necessarily implies that it cannot be avoided. In other words, that someone becomes pleased with himself if he does his work well cannot be avoided; and this *may* imply—that doesn’t depend on anyone—comparisons, and to that extent it is absurd to say it should be eradicated. Let us turn then to page 215, paragraph 2.

Mr. Reinken: “Extend self-love to others and it is—”

LS: “*amour-propre*.”

Mr. Reinken: “transformed into virtue, a virtue which has its root in the heart of every one of us. The less the object of our care is directly dependent on ourselves, the less we have to fear from the illusion of self-interest; the more general this interest becomes, the juster it is; and the love of the human race is nothing but the love of justice within us. If therefore we desire Emile to be a lover of truth, if we desire that he should indeed perceive it, let us keep him far from self-interest in all his business. The more care he bestows upon the happiness of others the wiser and better he is, and the fewer mistakes he will make between good and evil; but never allow him any blind preference founded merely on personal predilection or unfair prejudice. Why should he harm one person to serve another? What does it matter to him who has the greater share of happiness, providing he promotes the happiness of all? Apart from self-interest this care for the

^{xlvi} E, 541; 404.

general well-being is the first concern of the wise man, for each of us forms part of the human race and not part of any individual member of that race.”

LS: Yes. Let us read the two next paragraphs; they are short.

Mr Reinken: “To prevent pity degenerating into weakness we must generalize it and extend it to mankind. Then we only yield to it when it is in accordance with justice, since justice is of all the virtues that which contributes most to the common good. Reason and self-love compel us to love mankind even more than our neighbour, and to pity the wicked is to be very cruel to other men. Moreover, you must bear in mind that all these means employed to project my pupil beyond himself have also a distinct relation to himself; since they not only cause him inward delight, but I am—”

LS: Namely, the feeling, the sweet feeling going with compassion.

Mr. Reinken: “but I am also endeavouring to instruct him, while I am making him kindly disposed towards others.”^{xlvi}

LS: Ya, and Rousseau of course is aware of the fact that indiscriminate pity is foolish, and therefore he must see [the problem of] how can he make sure that pity will be identical with virtue. And the solution is simple: generalize it. Generalized pity is the same as generalized *amour-propre*, and the same as love of justice. That is the same formula which he uses in the *Social Contract*; the generalization of the will transforms the particular will into the general will. Why is this so, that the generalized *amour-propre* is generalized pity? Stated simply, pity for the underdog implies that one knows oneself *not* to be an underdog; so that one knows oneself to be superior. It is, well—we all have, I suppose, made our observations about that, but in studying the fountainhead of this thing, one has—it is easier somehow, and more precise. There was one more passage,²⁷ which is absolutely crucial, on page 216 at the end of the third paragraph.

Mr. Reinken: “There may not be so very great a difference in the amount of knowledge they possess, but there is all the difference in the world in the kind of knowledge. You are amazed to find that the one has noble sentiments of which the others have not the smallest germ, but remember that the latter are already philosophers and theologians while Emile does not even know what is meant by a philosopher and has scarcely heard the name of God.”^{xlvi}

LS: Not “scarcely”: “and has not even heard speaking of God.” So you see, Emile is a paragon of morality without ever having heard of God. This is crucial for the understanding of the sequel. We can read one more passage, on page 217—²⁸let us read paragraph 2—page 217, paragraph 2.

Mr. Reinken: “It is this that makes me speak so strongly, and as I think with good excuse: I have not pledged myself to any system, I depend as little as possible on arguments, and I trust to what I myself have observed. I do not base my ideas on what I have imagined, but on what I have seen. It is true that I have not confined my observations within the walls of any one town, nor to a single class of people; but having compared men of every class and every nation which I

^{xlvi} E, 547-48; 409-10.

^{xlvi} E, 549; 411.

have been able to observe in the course of a life spent in this pursuit, I have discarded as artificial what belonged to one nation and not to another, to one rank and not to another; and I have regarded as proper to mankind what was common to all, at any age, in any station, and in any nation whatsoever.”

LS: Next paragraph.

Mr. Reinken: “Now if in accordance with this method you follow from infancy the course of a youth who has not been shaped to any special mold, one who depends as little as possible on authority and the opinions of others, which will he most resemble, my pupil or yours? It seems to me that this is the question you must answer if you would know if I am mistaken.”^{xlix}

LS: Ya. One can state this as follows: the natural is the universal, which is not particular to any place or rank; what is *actually* found in all men—actually, not merely potentially—of every age, he says, which means, of course, also the earliest childhood; and there you find only self-preservation. There you do not find *amour-propre*; there you do not find also sexual desire, at least according to the pre-Freudian view—you must have heard of that complete revolution before. So, the natural is the universal in this sense; and also the moral is the universal. If you do not—I mean, your principles must be based on considering of the human race, not your neighbor. Now this moral—the moral is of course not actual in all men of every age, but it is possible in all men;²⁹ actual in all men of cultivated nature. The particular is the artificial, as he says here, based on prejudice. In a very—stated in the utmost generality, the view that the natural is the universal, and the moral is the universal, is, of course, the traditional philosophic view. But Rousseau³⁰ has a special implication here: if the particular is the artificial—that means, of course, also the untrue; unnatural and untrue—what does this imply?

Student: . . . religion?

LS: Yes, positive religion; surely. Surely. Natural religion would not be, but positive religion would have this character. In a way this is the formula for the whole thing. Emile is a man of nature, as he calls him, in opposition to the man of man, ordinary man as he ordinarily is. The education of Emile is *the* natural education, the education where completely—where not only no prejudices entered, but where a habit of resisting prejudices has been deeply ingrained. This is *the* goal of the education; and of course that means only—in other words, as you find on page 206, at the bottom, “brought up in the most absolute liberty, the greatest evil which he conceives is servitude.”¹ The greatest evil is not death, as it is according to Hobbes. Servitude. So the perfectly unprejudiced, the perfectly free individual, that is . . . And we have seen the many implications, which I cannot possibly repeat now. But we should try, you and I, to keep the main points in mind. And I think one of the main points is doubtless what we have been discussing today, the pity. This is primarily what the morality of sentimentality meant: the substitution of sentiment for reason, and for the natural inclinations. That plays a very great role in the eighteenth century, and *the* sentiment is, of course³¹ meant to be pity. And every child can say, this is “secularized Biblical religion,” meaning compassion, mercy, charity, divorced from its theological context. That is easy to say; every—I mean, every child can say it, and I believe does

^{xlix} E, 550; 411-12.

¹ E, 536; 400.

say it today. But that doesn't help us, because every secularization means a selection from the body of revealed religion. What is the principle of the selection? *Which* parts have been selected? This is not yet answered by the word secularization. I mean, one could have made other selections; why did *this* become central? And Rousseau's³² reasoning, I think, is rather clear on the basis of what we have seen today: compassion is the outstanding sentiment because of its peculiarly *pleasing* character—to repeat: to the pitier, to the pitied, and to the observer. And the question is, are there no other qualities—the question would be are there no other passions which might fill the same bill. And then one would come up to the problem. And surely Rousseau's doctrine of pity is absolutely inseparable from his—from the way in which he understood democracy, and includes the reasons—his reasoning is in favor of democracy. Yes.

Student: I was thinking about a contrast between Rousseau and liberal democracy. I had in mind Spinoza and the base of—his basing of natural right on human dignity, in other words, not on a human defect—^{li}

LS: Yes, but that is different, because in Spinoza, pity doesn't play any role at all. I mean, in other words, it is the old—you can say, the Stoic teaching: pity is a defect which disturbs the mind and which prevents you from doing the right thing.

Student: It is Spinoza.

LS: No, Spinoza is not sentimental.

Student: I have some vague idea about how this pity is connected with democracy, but would you be more explicit?

LS: Well, that's an old story; and I mustn't forget that the time is advanced. There is a passage which is very interesting, and which would give occasion for all kinds of reflection, in Aristotle's *Constitution of Athens*—you know, that is a book which was not known for many, many centuries; it was discovered only at the end of the last century. There, when he speaks of the settlement, after the Thirty Tyrants—do you know what that was? You know, after the Peloponnesian war, these members of the upper-class party, some kindred of Plato, established a so-called aristocracy, which was a very bloody tyranny. And finally the democracy led by Thrasybulus, won. And they behaved in a very sensible way. I mean, the chief evil doers, if they had not already fallen in battle, were executed; but no revenge: amnesty. And in this connection—so Aristotle speaks of the good-naturedness of the common people.^{lii} So, in other words, there—Aristotle was free from all sentimentality, but somehow he—could he have meant it ironically? I do not know; I don't see it. Let us take another case: when Thucydides writes his history,³³ he describes of course abominable actions of the common people in Corcyra and other places, bestial ones. But when he takes the two key cities, Sparta and Athens, one great difference between the two cities is that the Athenians are definitely more human than the

^{li} For the claim that Spinoza was “responsible for that version of modern republicanism that takes its bearings by the dignity of every man rather than by the narrowly conceived interest of every man,” see Leo Strauss “Preface” to *Spinoza's Critique of Religion* (New York: Schocken Books, 1965), 15-17.

^{lii} Aristotle, “Constitution of Athens,” section 40. The Athenians behave here better than a typical “common people,” however.

Spartans are. I mean, there is—there was the famous . . . certain very wonderful and great stories of Mytilene where the established party—Cleon tried to have them all hanged because they had defected from Athens; and yet there was a very strong feeling among the public, I mean the simple people, against the barbarity of the thing, and just by a hair's breadth, that saved them.^{liii} Now, that could—there may be something to that, that a high social position would make men harder; perhaps it is so. Let us assume it is so—do you see you must not make any inferences from people of high social standing today, because given the enormous mobility of life today, there is really no longer an upper class, yeah? That you cannot compare. And³⁴ [as for] the countries in which there are still upper classes, like some European countries, they of course have been so much—their wings have been clipped so much and they are so much exposed to popular critique, to say nothing of that very effective critique which is legislation, that this is no longer the old story. One would really have to see how the French nobility and the old English nobility and so on, how they behaved when they were really in the saddle. Now, I cannot do better than this, and would say, in order to be fair to both kinds, what was—in the case of aristocracy, [an aristocracy] which was decent was distinguished from the lower class by the fact that it made much higher demands on its members than the lower classes made on their members. Now, this could conceivably go together with greater hardness, harshness to others, too, do you see? That is—I can't do better than that. There may be something to that. One sees it often, I mean, I have seen it often: I know people who are genuinely compassionate who make high demands on themselves, and yet are compassionate, do not make equally high demands on others; but I have also seen quite a few people where the pity or compassion was only the other side of their easy-goingness regarding themselves. The Germans have a word which those of you who have ever heard German will know: *Gemütlichkeit*.³⁵ Goethe, who saw through many of these things very well, said *Gemütlichkeit* is indulgence towards the weakness of others and of oneself—and you know—you understand that—and that is something.^{liv} You know, easy-goingness, which is of course always pleasant, because we like to be indulged; but that is not the standard from which we can seriously judge. Rabbi Weiss.

Rabbi Weiss: I wonder if it would be fair to say about Aristotle that he ruled out pity; would this give rise to—he doesn't include it as a virtue.

LS: Yes, surely. Yeah, but on the other hand, he would say that a man who is—the virtue was called gentleness, *praotes* and a man who is not gentle—I mean, there are two [defects]. The opposite to it is cruelty and I do not remember now how he calls the other defect, opposite to cruelty, I don't remember it, does anyone?^{lv} But I suppose it would be something which is really a soft-heartedness—you know, a softy-ness—which is not good. Gentleness is a virtue; cruelty is a vice; that is clear.

Student: Is gentleness the virtue with respect to anger?

LS: Ya. Oh, yes, you are quite right, to anger.³⁶ And that would be—and the opposite is cruelty, the vice. Now, what is the other vice, if someone cannot even be angry where a reasonable man ought to be angry? He would regard this as a defect, Aristotle, just as he would say that someone

^{liii} Thucydides, 3.36-49.

^{liv} I have been unable to find the reference in Goethe. [Ed.]

^{lv} *Anorgesia*. See *Nicomachean Ethics* 1125b26-1126b10.

who doesn't—has no sense for good food or good drink—I mean, it is not a very serious defect, but it is surely a defect—the right thing is self-control, that, while you find it is good, you can stop in time. And the same would apply to anger. A man who is unable to feel anger is a defective man, from Aristotle's point of view.

Student: But then would that rule out pity altogether?

LS: No, of course not. But pity is not as such a virtue. Pity is one of these horses, the affects, the passions, which must be controlled. I mean, pity is as little a virtue as the desire [for] food—for good food—is a virtue. That is something which is natural, but which must be controlled. And the man who is insensitive to the sufferings of others is a rather beastly creature, there is no question about that. But there is of course an entirely different thing to saying the feeling of compassion is the root of all virtue, you know. Rousseau boosts pity much beyond anything earlier philosophers would have done, that is the thing. Do you want to say something?

Student: Only—the thing on pity here: is there not a close connection between the universalization—that rather strange thing that it is more important to feel pity towards all mankind than towards their neighbor.

LS: Ya.

Student: Is there not³⁷ [a] connection between democracies in the universalizing of pity and in the generalizing of the wills?

LS: Ya, sure. Ya.

Student: And this is where it comes in. Certain things of social welfare, as you might say.

LS: Could also Yes, no, that is clear; I mean, there is the generalization—that means, of course,³⁸ the generalization is the rational element. Ya? So that reason speaks about—establishes general or universal truths, and by generalizing pity you make it rational; so in other words, if you would not do that you might have an irrationally great pity for that sufferer at your doorstep, who wouldn't deserve to be so much pitied for And of course this kind of generalization which Rousseau has in mind might very well have been misconstrued to mean have³⁹ [compassion] for some people whom you never know, to whom you can never help in any way, wholly Platonic compassion, which is of course a mere pretense, and not a genuine passion. But that is not what Rousseau means; Rousseau means that if you do not—it is not generalized, then you are bound to overestimate, to see falsely the particular case. Well, what he refers to, for example: someone is led to the gallows—as you know, these things were formerly public acts—and people who were not particularly cruel⁴⁰—you know this from English literature—went there to observe: does he die bravely or does he make a speech from the gallows? You know, that was regarded as perfectly possible for a nice man to look at that. Good. But if someone is very soft-hearted he might have pity with a man who does not deserve to be pitied. By the way, Don Quixote is a good example. Don Quixote. You know, when he sees these chain-gang people, and he sees only these are poor fettered fellows; and the first thing he does is that he unfetters them.

END OF TAPE.

¹ Deleted “to get.”

² Deleted “be in.”

³ Deleted “yeah?”

⁴ Deleted “yeah—”

⁵ Deleted “Yeah?”

⁶ Deleted “Yeah.”

⁷ Deleted “after having.”

⁸ Deleted “is called by him.”

⁹ Deleted “the.”

¹⁰ Deleted “Sure. I mean.”

¹¹ Deleted “is”

¹² Deleted “and.”

¹³ Deleted “they must be free from—“

¹⁴ Deleted “yeah.”

¹⁵ Deleted “why is—he develops—“

¹⁶ Deleted “raise.”

¹⁷ Deleted “led—”

¹⁸ Deleted “let.”

¹⁹ Deleted “where.”

²⁰ Deleted “Yeah.”

²¹ Deleted “point—“

²² Deleted “and.”

²³ Deleted “of—“

²⁴ Deleted “was.”

²⁵ Deleted “yeah.”

²⁶ Deleted “yeah.”

²⁷ Deleted “yeah.”

²⁸ Deleted “yeah.”

²⁹ Deleted “of—an.”

³⁰ Deleted “does not—”

³¹ Deleted “—is”

³² Deleted “reason—”

³³ Deleted “and.”

³⁴ Deleted “to the extent in.”

³⁵ Deleted “now and.”

³⁶ Deleted “yeah.”

³⁷ Deleted “the.”

³⁸ Deleted “that means of course.”

³⁹ Deleted “suffering.”

⁴⁰ Deleted “went there.”

Session 11

[In progress] **LS:** —I am particularly impressed that youⁱ took the trouble of consulting the parallels in other writings of Rousseau, like the *Confessions* and the Letter to M. Beaumont. Now, you started from the question which is [inaudible] whether Rousseau agreed with the Vicar or not, a question which you raised: it cannot be answered in the affirmative without investigation. But then you said something else, you said¹ there is a difference between Rousseau's convictions and those of the Vicar. But then you said Rousseau's conviction may nevertheless be akin to the conviction of the Vicar on a formal ground, that Rousseau's conviction, too, may be exposed in his opinion to insoluble objections, is this correct?

Student: Yes.

LS: And this would mean that the basis of Rousseau's own position could not be reason simply—as little as the Vicar's position—and would have to be something like feeling, sentiment, and so on, is this correct?

Student: Yes.

LS: What then is its superiority, in Rousseau's view, if it has the same not-rational basis?

Student: I think its superiority is that it provides for an asocial individual.

LS: Yes, but why would this be a necessity?

Student: Somehow, I'm not sure because, as I say, I am not able to read the *Reveries*, but I somehow feel that it has to do with the independent individual.

LS: So, in other words, there are two ways of life: that of the citizen and that of the solitary; [LS writes on the blackboard] and the citizen requires this *weltanschauung* of the Savoyard Vicar's, and the solitary is a man who requires² [the other that Rousseau presents]. But the conflict between these two *weltanschauungs* cannot be set aright, is that the point?

Student: Except that the reason of each seems to confirm the pre-rational sentiment. Rousseau's account, despite its insoluble difficulties is an account by the use of human reason which confirms the pre-rational sentiment that leads to materialism; the same could be said regarding the spiritualistic account.

LS: That is perfectly correct. And the question would be . . . Then you would have to find the criterion which would permit you . . . [LS writes on the blackboard] I mean, you have here the solitary; and then you have the citizen. And the citizen has the dualistic metaphysic; and the solitary has the monistic one. And we are not sure whether it was formerly called materialistic, is that it?

ⁱ Referring to the author of a seminar paper, unrecorded.

Student: Yes.

LS: So, both are equally indemonstrable, they are equally. And if there is to be a superiority of this, that would have to be decided on other than theoretical grounds; that is the conclusion, I believe, to which we are led, if you are right.

Student: [Inaudible: to the effect—I think that is true].

LS: Let us only make clear what you imply. Well, we have to see whether this is so, but it is surely something which has to be considered. I believe that a subdivision of this argument is what you say about the difference between the Vicar and Locke, and your interpretation of it, that in this respect Rousseau would also be opposed to Locke. That the Vicar and Rousseau agree over against Locke, that we have to check. It was very interesting to me because I haven't studied that, now at least, that you think that both accounts of the facts in the *Confessions* and in the *Emile* are factually incorrect.

Student: The only ground I have for that As I said, I really am not prepared to verify this, but it's based mainly on what I've been told about the results of biographical research.

LS: I see.

Student: I feel that the account in the *Emile* is factually incorrect.

LS: Yes, but . . . good; and feeling of course is not good enough. That applies, of course, not only to this historical question; you have to be a bit more cautious.

Student: It's based, of course, on certain implications which I have drawn out of the passages in the *Confessions*.

LS: Well, let us see; perhaps it is not so difficult. We must of course limit ourselves to the *Emile*, and perhaps it is possible to decide that. Before we turn to the discussion, I would like to ask Mr. Mueller to give us his information about Emile, about the name Emile.

Mr. Mueller: Well, I don't want to suggest that I've been in constant pursuit of the problem. . . .

LS: No, no; but what you told me privately is, I am sure, of interest to the class.

Mr. Mueller: In looking at Plutarch, looking at the life of Aemilius Paulus, and seeing a number of interesting things [inaudible] was that to suggest that he has Aemilius Paulus in mind when he named Emile. He was a priest terribly learned in the ancient writings which . . . even though he knew better, Plutarch says, when he [inaudible] affects this point: seeing an eclipse, he knew the reason for the eclipse, being instructed in such matters, but nonetheless he performed for the sake of the soul what were perhaps the appropriate sacraments.

LS: You said also

Mr. Mueller: Oh, yes, at the beginning, Plutarch says that he wasn't raised like the other Romans and that he was not taught to flatter the multitude, or to practice oratory, plead cases for the sake of mere oratory—I think that was it—even though he gave his own children a very interesting education. Also he was married twice, and his first . . . Being divorced, he then had his two sons adopted by very distinguished families. One was adopted by the family of Scipio, and the other I don't remember.ⁱⁱ [The first became] Scipio the Younger.

LS: What I like in the very question is that I am sure Rousseau gave some thought to the question of how to call that paragon; and since the female, who will make her appearance shortly, is called Sophie, which is really a meaningful name, being wisdom, it is safe to assume that there was a reason why he picked the name Emile. And what you told me makes it at least a worthwhile hypothesis to go into that question whether it is not Plutarch's Aemilius Paulus, especially since Rousseau admired Plutarch so much. That is very interesting; I am grateful to you. I mean, these pseudonyms of course must always be studied; and the most famous case, at least in this country, probably is the *Federalist Papers*: they are signed Publius. The question must be raised why did they pick that name?

But now let us turn to our text; where is that? Where did we stop? My notes seem to be in absolute disorder. We stopped last time at 217. I get it now; thank you very much. He starts here at the beginning of this assignment, page 217, the fifth paragraph, he will form the man of nature, "*l'homme de la nature*," in opposition to the man of man but not to send him back to the forest. In other words, he should be a natural man within society; and no authority should govern him except the authority of his own reason. Let us never forget that: this is the aim of the education altogether, the perfectly unprejudiced man.ⁱⁱⁱ Let us read on page 218, the fourth paragraph, where he takes issue with Locke. I believe this would be necessary for a proper scholarly study of the *Emile*, to bring together all explicit references to Locke, because Locke's³ *Some Thoughts Concerning Education* is obviously the nearest to Rousseau as a target; and read that by itself and see what the agreements and what the differences are, both the differences pointed out by Rousseau, and those differences which exist in fact. But naturally we cannot do that here. Now, read this, please, this remark about Locke.

Mr. Reinken: "Locke would have us begin with the study of spirits and go on to that of bodies. This is the method of superstition, prejudice, and error; it is not the method of nature—"

LS: "of reason."

Mr. Reinken: "nor even that of well ordered reason."

LS: I see. This may be a printing error here; because here it is: "it is not the method of reason nor even that of well-ordered nature." This is the text I have here, but is this the correct text?

Student: It is the same that we have in this other edition. Your text is in accordance with my French text.

ⁱⁱ By the family of Fabius Maximus.

ⁱⁱⁱ *E*, 551; 412.

LS: And there is no reference . . . ?

Student: No.^{iv}

LS: I see. So she did again the evil thing. Now, go on.

Mr. Reinken: “it is to learn to see by shutting our eyes. We must have studied bodies long enough before we can form any true idea of spirits, or even suspect that there are such beings. The contrary practice merely puts materialism on a firmer footing.”

LS: Yes, all right. Now, Locke’s method leads to materialism, and this is . . . but what is wrong with materialism? We must see. In the sequel he says . . . Let us read the next paragraph.

Mr. Reinken: “Since our senses are the first instruments to our learning, corporeal and sensible bodies are the only bodies we directly apprehend. The word “spirit” has no meaning for any one who has not philosophized. To the unlearned and to the child a spirit is merely a body. Do they not fancy that spirits groan, speak, fight, and make noises? Now you must own that spirits with arms and voices are very like bodies. This is why every nation on the face of the earth, not even excepting the Jews, have made to themselves idols.”^v

LS: “Corporeal Gods.” In other words, all men, all nations, including the Jews, *are* materialists; and even if they speak of spirits they mean by spirits a certain kind of bodies. But this doesn’t make it true; on the contrary. Now, in the next paragraph, let us read that.

Mr. Reinken: “The perception of our action upon other bodies must have first induced us to suppose that their action upon us was effected in like manner. Thus man began by thinking that all things whose action affected him were alive.”

LS: “Thus man began by animating all beings the action of which he felt.” Go on.

Mr. Reinken: “He did not recognise the limits of their powers, and he therefore supposed that they were boundless; as soon as he had supplied them with bodies they became his gods. In the earliest times men went in terror of everything and everything in nature seemed alive. The idea of matter was developed as slowly as that of spirit, for the former is itself an abstraction. Thus the universe was peopled with gods like themselves.”

LS: No, no: “with sensible Gods,” with gods which can be sensibly perceived.

Mr. Reinken: “sensible gods. The stars, the winds and the mountains, rivers, trees, and towns, their very dwellings, each had its soul, its god, its life. The teraphim of Laban, the manitos of savages, the fetishes of the negroes, every work of nature and of man, were the first gods of mortals; polytheism was their first religion and idolatry their earliest form of worship.”^{vi}

^{iv} Indeed, this reversal seems to be Foxley’s doing, rather than a translation of an alternate manuscript.

^v *E*, 551-52; 413.

^{vi} *E*, 552-53; 413.

LS: Let us stop here. So, in other words, we have now, if we needed any evidence, we have it here: the savages are full of superstition, polytheism, idolatry. So that if Rousseau really would have said that the age of the savages is the perfect age, this would have . . . We have discussed this at some length when we spoke of the *Second Discourse*. Mr. Reinken?

Mr. Reinken: We also have in the same context that the child imputes a will to the chair.

LS: Very good. So, you remember when we discussed this question at some length: is a child able to distinguish between animate and inanimate beings? And do you remember why this was so important?

Student: Because he was to be reasonable and accept necessity.

LS: Yes, he was to be free from what? From a feeling of, what was the precise term?

Student: A feeling of revenge?

LS: Yes, revenge and all this kind of thing; and can he distinguish between an ill will and a mere blindness, as it is, without any will; and I suggested that he cannot distinguish, and therefore Rousseau's doctrine there *as stated* is untenable. And now he admits it practically in so many words, although he speaks here only of the grown-up children, the savages.

Then he develops, on the basis of this, since a child cannot possibly understand spirit, a child cannot possibly believe in God as a non-corporeal being; and this is a retroactive justification for his having failed to speak of God to his Emile. And of course, the other implication is that a savage can also not believe in God; and therefore it is unfair to try to convert them to monotheism. This is not stated, but clearly implied. Let us turn to page 222, in the third paragraph.

Mr. Reinken: "We have seen the road by which the cultivated human mind approaches these mysteries—"

LS: Which mysteries? The sexual mysteries, yes? Or does he not speak of it here? No, not yet; it is still the mysteries of the universe; I am sorry. Because he uses this phrase also. . . . Go on.

Mr. Reinken: "and I am ready to admit that it would not attain to them naturally, even in the bosom of society, till a much later age. But as there are in this same society inevitable causes which hasten the development of the passions, if we did not also hasten the development of the knowledge which controls these passions we should indeed depart from the path of nature and disturb her equilibrium. When we can no longer restrain a precocious development in one direction we must promote a corresponding development in another direction, so that the order of nature may not be inverted, and so that things should progress together, not separately, so that the man, complete at every moment of his life, may never find himself at one stage in one of his faculties and at another stage in another faculty."^{vii}

^{vii} *E*, 557; 417-18.

LS: Now, which are these faculties—apart from that of knowledge—which are in such a rapid progress at that stage? I mean, he says here, “the inevitable causes which accelerate the progress of the passions” force us to speed up the progress of his knowledge. What does he mean by that?

Student: Hormones.

LS: Yes, well, that is very physiologically expressed. But let us say sex, which is also not a very unscientific expression, I believe. In other words, religion is introduced when the child is old enough to understand its dogmas *and* when his passions need these dogmas for the regulation of the passions. That is the reason why this comes in at this stage. Prior to the awakening of sex, the passions which exist there can still be controlled without religion; but not afterwards. In the next paragraph—we cannot read that—about when he, in the fourth sentence or so, when he says, “Let a Turk.”

Mr. Reinken: “Let a Turk, who thinks Christianity so absurd at Constantinople, come to Paris and see what they think of Mahomet. It is in matters of religion more than in anything else that prejudice is triumphant.”

LS: “that opinion is triumphant.” So, the goal of education, freedom from opinion, concerns therefore religion above everything else, because opinion is triumphant in religion. Read the next sentence, please.

Mr. Reinken: “But when we who profess to shake off its yoke entirely, we who refuse to yield any homage to authority, decline to teach Emile anything which he could not learn for himself in any country, what religion shall we give him—”^{viii}

LS: Answer: a religion which is a natural religion. That will come now in the sequel. Gradually now we approach the Vicar. Yes?

Student: There is a curious thing in the previous point where you said that the ideas of religion were only introduced to any normal child when two⁴ [conditions are met]: first, when he is ready for them, to understand them, capable of understanding them; and secondly, when they are needed in order to control the passions.

LS: Yes.

Student: It would seem odd that there would be a coincidence, that these two things would happen at the same time. What is the exact connection?

LS: I could give you an answer which Rousseau would easily give; whether it satisfies you, I don’t know: nature is good. So when the needs arise, they are fulfilled; the old story: a kind of teleology which is admitted even by Marx in his statement, “Man does not pose himself any task

^{viii} E, 558; 419.

which he cannot fulfill.”^{ix} You know that, Marx’s dogma? That is only, in a modified version, the old story that there is no natural need the fulfillment of which is not guaranteed by nature—no natural need, I mean; not fancy needs. This he would say; I mean, on the basis of the complete denial of teleology, which has become so common in modern times. It seems implausible; it seems a mere coincidence. But do you not know of an example which we all would admit, that there is such a fitting of need and fulfillment? Well, how come that when a woman has given birth to a child, she ordinarily is able to give suck to the child? I mean, the fact that there is a mechanism in the female body which brings it about that giving birth to a child also makes her milk-producing does not do away with this strange coincidence that the baby needs the milk. In other words, empirically there is some teleology; and all attempts to explain it by mechanical terms . . . Well, I don’t want to go to these famous examples, the details of which I have forgotten, about certain insects—you must know that; you are the natural scientist here—about certain insects who lay eggs or whatever it is, on a single night—does any one know what I mean?—in a single night in which a certain flower blossoms. Have you heard of such a thing? You have heard of it. There are such extraordinary things. You know it, Mr. Boyan?

Mr. Boyan: I thought you were going to give a different kind of example, the insects that change color; they all used to be white.

LS: You mean mimicry and this kind of thing?

Mr. Boyan: Most insects used to be white; and then when people came along with their industries and the smoke in the air, and so they stood out, and the birds ate them . . .^x

LS: Yes, mimicry, that is called. Yes, that is the famous problem of Darwin altogether, to give a mechanical explanation for the apparent teleology. But the Darwinian theory presupposes the apparent teleology; because it is meant to explain it away. The *prima facie* evidence is in favor of the teleology. Mr. Butterworth.

Mr. Butterworth: I had another question back in another paragraph.

LS: To what do you want to go back?

Mr. Butterworth: The paragraph in which you were talking about natural religion. The question is, is Rousseau’s reason for giving a natural religion for Emile really a sufficient reason; because of the fact that he says, “we want to teach Emile things that he could learn by himself in every country,” and then it seems to be also that he could live in any country with this natural religion. But inherently that might be false, because simply if he were to go into France at that time and try and live openly by that natural religion, he would encounter quite a few difficulties.

^{ix} From the preface to *A Contribution to the Critique of Political Economy*, the relevant except from which can be found in Robert Tucker ed., *The Marx Engels Reader*, Second Edition (New York: W.W. Norton, 1978), 3-8.

^x This seems to be an exaggerated account of a phenomenon, industrial melanism, which has affected some insect species.

LS: Excuse me; if he is completely indifferent to any positive religion, he could, according to the principle stated here, adapt himself to the external conformance with *any* positive religion. So, he could worship the emperor in Japan, and make voodooos in other countries, or, as Napoleon put it—in a way a pupil of Rousseau, you know; Napoleon was in a way a pupil of Rousseau—⁵ “I was a Muslim in the Orient; and I am a Catholic in France.”^{xi} But we come to that later.

Now, only one point on page 223, paragraph 2. Rousseau makes it clear, provisionally . . . we read only this sentence: “Instead of telling you here what I think myself about the subject, I will say what a man who had much greater worth than I thought about it.”^{xii} So, formally, he says, I will not tell you my opinion, I will tell you the opinion of another man; but this man is of much greater worth than I, and you take your choice. This is the first statement about this issue: is Rousseau in agreement with the Savoyard Vicar or is he not?

Now, we have to watch while reading the argument, we have also to watch the remarks about the intellectual and moral competence of the Savoyard Vicar: these two things go together. The Savoyard Vicar is a character of Rousseau; whether he has a basis in fact or not, this is uninteresting. Therefore we have to know what is the quality, the qualification of that mouthpiece; what are his intellectual and moral qualifications. Now, let us turn to page 224, the fourth paragraph.

Mr. Reinken: “This worthy priest was a poor Savoyard clergyman who had offended his bishop by some youthful fault; he had crossed the Alps to find a position which he could not obtain in his own country. He lacked neither wit nor learning.”^{xiii}

LS: Let us stop here. You see, this is not a very high praise; you must not give . . . “He was not without *esprit*, nor without letters.” Well, that is compatible with being barely literate, of course, and having some common sense; but surely not a philosopher. That is the first statement we find. This is confirmed by a later remark: we see also that he had had a youthful adventure. Now, this is so generally stated that we cannot say whether it reflects on his character or not; it will be later more delicately developed. Later on, on page 225, in the second paragraph.

Mr. Reinken: “The neglect of all religion soon leads to the neglect of a man’s duties.”^{xiv}

LS: “The duties of man.” Let us keep this in mind: without religion, no duties of man. We turn then to page 226, at the top of the page.

Mr. Reinken: “To protect the unlucky youth from the moral death which threatened him, he began to revive his self-love^{xv} and his good opinion of himself. He showed him a happier future in the right use of his talents.”^{xvi}

^{xi} In remarks to the Council of State, August 1, 1800.

^{xii} *E*, 558; 419. A paraphrase, not a direct quote.

^{xiii} *E*, 560; 421.

^{xiv} *E*, 561; 421.

^{xv} *Amour-propre*.

^{xvi} *E*, 562; 422.

LS: You see how important it is, Rabbi Weiss; first, how good *amour-propre* can be. This was a boy—Rousseau himself, you know—at the lowest grade of his morality ever, and the first thing this sensible educator did was to awaken in him what we would call self-respect. But self-respect is, of course, a modification of *amour-propre*, because self-respect always is based on some form of comparison. We leave this now. We turn now to page 226 in the third paragraph.

Mr. Reinken: “I am weary of speaking in the third person, and the precaution is unnecessary—”

LS: In other words, hitherto he had spoken of this young juvenile delinquent; and now he tells us, that juvenile delinquent was I. Read that, please.

Mr. Reinken: “for you are well aware, my dear friend, that I myself—”

LS: Oh, “dear friend”! “Fellow citizen,” “dear fellow citizen.” I mean, she really should be sent back to college. She is an M.A., I saw; she doesn’t deserve it. Go on.

Mr. Reinken: “that I myself was this unhappy fugitive; I think I am so far removed from the disorders of my youth that I may venture to confess them, and the hand which rescued me well deserves that I should at least do honor to its goodness at the cost of some slight shame.”^{xvii}

LS: Why does he now reveal his identity? I mean, it could have gone on in the third person. And he does something more: he identifies the addressee, in addition, in a general way. He doesn’t say “my dear friend,” he says “my fellow citizen.” What does that mean?

Student: [Inaudible; to this effect: He was from Geneva; it’s a fellow citizen of Geneva that he’s talking about.]

LS: Why is this relevant?

Student: Because in Geneva you don’t have too many Savoyard vicars, do you?

LS: None. So, in other words, since he has to speak of a questionable Catholic—I mean, one can safely say that he was a questionable Catholic, who had in addition, apart from the fact that he is not a sincere Catholic, he had committed a certain impropriety which looked different to Protestants than to Catholics—he naturally addresses it to a Protestant who is more sympathetic, by definition. The unbelieving Christian here is a Catholic, and therefore the Protestants can say, well, we don’t have such black sheep among us, and if the Catholics have them, that’s the fault of Catholicism—a famous topic of Protestant argument. Now, what was this particular [failing]. We have to identify briefly the impropriety, this juvenile delinquency of the priest. What was that? Paragraph 5, page 228.

Mr. Reinken: “By birth I was a peasant and poor; to till the ground was my portion; but my parents thought it a finer thing that I should learn to get my living as a priest and they found means to send me to college. I am quite sure that neither my parents nor I had any idea of seeking after what was good, useful, or true; we only sought what was wanted to get me

^{xvii} E, 563; 423.

ordained. I learned what was taught me, I said what I was told to say, I promised all that was required, and I became a priest. But I soon discovered that when I promised not to be a man, I had promised more than I could perform.”^{xviii}

LS: What does this allusion mean?

Student: Chastity.

LS: Celibacy; yes. Go on.

Mr. Reinken: “Conscience, they tell us, is the creature of⁶ prejudice but I know from experience that conscience persists in following the order of nature in spite of all the laws of man. In vain is this or that forbidden; remorse makes her voice heard but feebly when what we do is permitted by well-ordered nature, and still more when we are doing her bidding.”^{xix}

LS: Let us now leave it here. Now, what did he do? I mean also the following paragraph. Mr. Seltzer, have you made up your mind what this adventure of the priest was? Well, apparently he had some illicit relation—of course [an] illicit relation—with an unmarried woman; because he boasts of the fact that he never committed adultery. So, this would seem to settle the issue. But the really funny thing is this: Rousseau would, by entrusting the Profession of Faith to this man, to a man with a moral taint, he seems to discredit what comes out of the mouth of the man. Why did he do that? This seems most inept; and he surely did not wish to discredit that Profession of Faith. Now, why did he do that? I mean, that is a more subtle question, but I think it must be raised.

Student: Well, he’s bringing religion in as a counter-weight to sex.

LS: That is a very good point; thank you. I didn’t think of that; let us make a note of that; that is very good. It shows a connection. But it shows of course also What does it show, however? That it is not sufficient; because a priest was religiously brought up, and it didn’t help. But nevertheless the general connection which you stated is, I am sure, correct. Mr. Seltzer.

Mr. Seltzer: Isn’t he trying to show how he arrived at this natural religion; that he arrived at this because his misconduct was discovered not because of his indiscretion, but because of his scruples about it?

LS: Yes, but his scruples were of a very limited kind: no adultery, as distinguished from fornication. But that will not do. I still repeat that the point which you make, that it is an indication of the connection between—that the religion comes in in connection with the regulation of sex, is important.

Student: Is the answer not In this particular case, it seemed to me that Rousseau didn’t really accept this as a serious blemish on the man’s character.

^{xviii} *E*, 566; 425-26.

^{xix} *E*, 566; 426.

LS: Of course not; but still, he has to reckon with his readers. And while probably in the upper classes of society the French were not very strict, as you know, in the eighteenth century—and that is quite true—but still, Rousseau is here not—how shall I say—a man of the drawing-room, you know, or some officer of the French guard, but he is talking as a responsible educator; he cannot

Mr. Reinken: Is not the point that he really, not just that he really didn't think it very serious and that this sort of thing goes on all the time, but that he thought that the rule which the man broke was a rule which should never have been made?

LS: That is correct; and this he can do because he is addressing a fellow citizen, i.e. a Genevan, i.e. a Protestant; that is clear. But still, it is nevertheless a moral taint, because, after all, strict Protestantism doesn't permit this kind of laxity which the priest committed nevertheless. Since he was unable to marry by virtue of his vow, he should not have had any relations with a woman, that is perfectly simple. And I think a strict Protestant would have said the same thing, and would have said, well, you have an excuse, but to have an excuse means, of course, you did something wrong. Whenever you say this is excusable, you say it is intrinsically wrong.

Student: But the point in relation to Mr. Reinken's question was that if he is bringing in religion as a counter-weight, it can't completely overcome it. The point is that you mustn't make the impossible. This is a question, that the counter-weight is operating not by thwarting nature completely, but perhaps by regulating it.

LS: That is absolutely right, what you and Mr. Reinken said, but this would lead to a very long excursus for which we do not have time; but I must say a few words about that nevertheless. Rousseau wrote a novel, *The New Heloise, or Julie*, in which he discussed this theme at the greatest length, and with very great delicacy compared with what novelists do today—you have no idea—I mean, as delicate as Richardson, I believe, would write about these matters; you know, the eighteenth century Richardson. But still, if one looks through all the frills, then what comes out clearly is this: the heroine was seduced by her governor, a fellow called Saint-Preux, and this is, of course, also Rousseau, in a manner. And this leads to a big scandal, and the most massive consequences of this misconduct are avoided only by the fact that the father of Julie boxes her ears when he hears of that action—because she is pregnant—and then as a consequence, she falls, and this is the end of her pregnancy. But⁷ [Saint-Preux] is of course thrown out of the house with disgrace. And then, many years later, Julie marries a friend of her father, M. de Wolmar, much older than she, and a perfectly respectable gentleman, and of course also very wealthy. And now she loves her husband; I mean, she undergoes a religious conversion on the night before her wedding, and she eradicates her lingering feelings for Saint-Preux out of her heart—a very impressive scene. She lives . . . she gets children and [is] perfectly happy. And Saint-Preux is called in later—you know they are of overflowing generosity—as the educator of Julie's children from the marriage, and they are all absolutely generous and virtuous; it is unbearable to read these many adjectives. But the really serious thing is this: Julie is perfectly happy. She has only one difficulty, and that is—they are Protestant—that her husband, M. de Wolmar, is an atheist. But he conforms absolutely with the demands of society—he goes to church, and everything—but she knows that; and this is the only fly in the ointment, if I may use this expression. And now, the thing which is never clearly stated is this—but which comes out of

the action as a whole: the true unhappiness of Julie is that she has married the man she did not love. Her love still belongs to Saint-Preux, her early lover. And this is, of course, to show, to indicate that love cannot be controlled by any law human or divine; that is, I think, the meaning of the whole thing. And this has very much to do with the point which you raised now; you know, that there is an But still of course, for most purposes, practical purposes, it is of course sufficient to control action, as distinguished from sentiment. Mr. Butterworth.

Mr. Butterworth: Just one thing where I sort of think that Mr. Morrison has a point is, isn't it earlier in the *Emile*, or else it's in the *Confessions*, where Rousseau explicitly speaks of a priest, the Abbé de St. Pierre, and says, it has been said of him that he, not being able to stick by his vows, but being against adultery, kept pretty servants in his house; and whenever they had children, they were given a trade. I think it was earlier in the book where this came up, in the *Emile*, or else it is in the *Confessions*.

LS: He speaks about the Abbé St. Pierre in the *Confessions*.^{xx}

Mr. Butterworth: The point is, if this were really a horrible act, you wouldn't go around putting a man's name to it in this way.

LS: But I don't quite get it.

Mr. Butterworth: He does preface it by saying, "it has been said of," but then he explicitly says that it was the Abbé of St. Pierre, and he says the Abbé—so that we know that he is a man of faith—believed that adultery was bad *but* he kept pretty servants in his house. And whenever the servants had children . . . the implication is very strong^{xxi}

LS: Yes, but you must not forget what it meant to be an abbé in eighteenth century France. The most famous example is M. de Talleyrand, you know, the bishop—but that was merely an arrangement of his family, and it was one way of taking care of children of noble but impoverished families.

Mr. Butterworth: But the point that I'm trying to make is that on this basis, and just taking this historical viewpoint, I wonder if it really is such a blemish.

LS: But, you must . . . hat is a famous question which I know from Machiavelli, when people say, what Machiavelli said was absolutely elementary; in Italy everyone thought that way. But one only has to read contemporary statements—for example, the sermons of Savonarola, and quite a few other things—to see that this was *not* what everyone thought. Some tough politicians thought that way, but the difference is the difference [between] what men do—and they do most horrible things at all times—and what responsible teachers of the public say, like Rousseau, you know: name on the title page, and opposed to all frivolity all the time, in all his writings. And then it has to be taken more seriously. Mr. Johnson.

^{xx} However, the reference, in question, which does not explicitly name St. Pierre, is in *Emile* (E, 473; 347).

^{xxi} Again, he does not name St. Pierre.

Mr. Johnson: [Inaudible. To this effect: You are speaking so far of the original fault of the Savoyard priest; but, from page 227, he appears not to have completely overcome the fault], so it was not only an original sin, but one that recurs.

LS: Well, you take original sin now in a very loose sense. But you said something about his age?

Mr. Johnson: No, I just said that the action . . . He still is a priest, isn't he?

LS: He was a priest when he committed that act.

Mr. Johnson: What about when he speaks to Rousseau?

LS: That is years after.

Mr. Johnson: Yes, but is it at a time when there is no longer any vow . . . ?

LS: Oh, yes; he makes the remark that this infirmity has remained with him. I forgot now where it is, but he made a definite remark to this effect; and I think Rousseau even—I am sorry, I cannot find it now—there is a remark somewhere to this effect.

Student: The remark is on page 227, about 8 lines down.^{xxii}

LS: Aha; so in other words, he was not quite regular in this respect . . .

Student: "Except for the fault which had formerly brought about his disgrace, a fault which he had only partially overcome."

LS: That is a wonderful statement, isn't it? I mean, it is left entirely to the imagination of the reader what he means by such a partial overcoming; very funny. But that Rousseau could give rise to so much hilarity, one would not expect from his . . .

Student: I think there is an ambiguity about his fault and what he says himself in the fourth paragraph of 229; being—surely the Vicar here is made to say, and Rousseau would agree—and both a stiff Calvinist in Geneva, to whom he is ostensibly addressing himself, and a discreet duchess in Paris, who is the most likely reader of this book would agree—that the worst thing was to be *found* in adultery^{xxiii}; and surely he is an imprudent man, and not reasoning quite as well as another . . .

LS: Yes, that people of lax morals wouldn't find anything particularly wrong, that goes without saying; but as I say, this is not good enough for a man who makes the claim which Rousseau raises, for himself *and* for the Savoyard Vicar, who is said to preach a religion which is by far superior to any other religion. The question still remains.

^{xxii} E, 563; 424.

^{xxiii} E, 566-67; 426.

Student: Just an elementary point that I think would go some way towards assisting the argument of those who try to identify Rousseau with the Vicar: on page 224, he first mentions the youthful fault of the Vicar; then on page 226 he talks about his own disorders of youth, Rousseau's own, and he says, I think that I am far removed from my own disorders of youth. And on the following page, he says that the Vicar has only partially overcome his; and then in another following page, he actually describes the Vicar's fault. So, during this context, he calls attention to his own youth^{xxiv}

LS: Very good; that is good.

Student: Although the fault he names is misanthropy, whereas the Vicar's fault is lust; his seems to be

LS: No, no; he also speaks . . . there is no question that Rousseau had a very irregular youth regarding sex. I mean, you only have to read his *Confessions*, and disregarding all the No, I think that is very good, what you say. But nevertheless, that doesn't do away with the fact that, after all, since it is a vicar who presents the Profession, a man much more worthy than he himself, as he says, the question of the moral taint of the Vicar returns. Now, I would suggest this point, that by mentioning, apart from the anti-Catholic implication of that mention, [it] fulfills another purpose; because the Vicar has a moral taint which is in a way much graver—after all, such infirmities are very frequent; let us not fool ourselves about that. But the Vicar has an infirmity which is very rare, and that is that he is a Catholic priest who is in his heart a Protestant. In other words, the visible, vulgar infirmity draws our attention to the invisible and non-vulgar infirmity which is nevertheless also morally speaking a questionable practice, there is no question about that. Now of course, again—now I come back to what you said, Mr. Nicgorski—this infirmity, this more important infirmity of the Vicar is of course also the infirmity of Rousseau. This, I believe, is the overall context.

Mr. Nicgorski: Somewhere in the *Letters from the Mountain*, Rousseau has said that despite the fact that he was a Catholic Protestant, he always had the same religious principles; he always maintained the same underlying principles. He was consistent.^{xxv}

LS: Well, Rousseau became a Catholic on no ground but convenience—you know, in his first trip to Italy; this is the same thing. But the deeper problem is not this switch between, what, Protestantism and Catholicism or all of that, but that Rousseau asserts principles which he does not hold. This “insincerity” of both the Vicar and, in another way, of Rousseau is a much more interesting moral problem than that of this sexual thing.

Student: I don't quite understand how his incontinence was discovered.

LS: Pardon? Oh, that is only gossip.

Student: No, it is more important, because he says that one can always escape punishment by being guilty of a worse fault; and this is what these experiences

^{xxiv} E, 563; 423-24.

^{xxv} Nicgorski may be referring to the *Letter to Beaumont* (Rousseau, 2001, 46-48).

LS: Oh, I see, I have somewhat misrepresented you. I believe what he means is this: from the point of view of sheer cleverness, adultery is safer than . . . because the other party has a very great interest in concealing the act; whereas a young girl might come to her mother and tell her, and then it would come out. That's the only meaning I could connect with this very complicated sentence. So that, how does he say at the end of this paragraph; he says—

Mr. Reinken: “I was the victim of my scruples rather than of my incontinence, and I had reason to believe, from the reproaches which accompanied my disgrace, that one can often escape punishment by being guilty of a worse fault.”^{xxvi}

LS: Yes, I think he means that. Adultery is safer than simple fornication on this ground. I think that [is what] he means. Rousseau knew something of the ways of the world, as we see. Now, let us continue. There is one point somewhat earlier, on page 227, in the second paragraph. Let us read that.

Mr. Reinken: “This opportunity was a long time coming. Before taking his disciple into his confidence, he tried to get the seeds of reason and kindness which he had sown in my heart to germinate. The most difficult fault to overcome in me was a certain haughty misanthropy, a certain bitterness against the rich and successful—”

LS: Here, here. You remember this passage we read about the rich and the poor in the discussion of pity? Go on.

Mr. Reinken: “as if their wealth and happiness had been gained at my own expense, and as if their supposed happiness had been unjustly taken from my own.”

LS: In other words, simply stated, there was an element of envy in Rousseau's rebellion against the rich; and perhaps this was still in a more sophisticated form powerful in him when he wrote the *Emile*. But, the next point.

Mr. Reinken: “The foolish vanity of youth, which kicks against the pricks of humiliation, made me only too much inclined to this angry temper”^{xxvii}

LS: But what does it mean, one doesn't want to be humiliated? That is a very ambiguous term. I have heard occasionally of one scholar accusing another scholar who had a discussion with him of attempting to humiliate him in public, meaning if he is refuted, that is a humiliation, which is of course a fantastic notion of what a humiliation is. You know, there can be a super-sensitivity to—how shall I say?—to be shown up in one's defects which is highly unreasonable. And Rousseau apparently had that. This is only an indication of the connection between pity and envy of which I spoke in another way last time.

Mr. Reinken: What is that, “kicking against the pricks”?

^{xxvi} *E*, 566-67; 426.

^{xxvii} *E*, 564; 424.

LS: Well, literally . . . “against the pricks” is again the Master of Arts edition; what he says literally is “which kicks against humiliation,” the pricks aren’t there. The pricks are M.A. “*qui⁸ regimbe contre l’humiliation*”; that is the text. Now, there are a number of remarks on page 230 which make clear the bias of the Vicar, which we must very briefly consider; we cannot read it. He has “a heart made for adoring, for worshipping God,” and he is of course concerned with finding “a rule for his duties”—these are all the principles—he prefers “to be deceived rather than to believe nothing,”^{xxviii} you see? So, this characterizes in a way what is, answers the question what is, the bias of the Vicar. His conviction is then the insufficiency of reason, and therefore he turns to “the Inner Light,” on page 231, paragraph 4, in the middle of the paragraph.

Mr. Reinken: “So I chose another guide and said, ‘Let me follow the Inner Light; it will not lead me so far astray as others have done, or if it does it will be my own fault, and I shall not go so far wrong if I follow my own illusions as if I trusted to their deceits.’”^{xxix}

LS: Yes; and then he goes on and speaks that he found a truth, but this truth is exposed to insoluble objections. But *all* positions that men take are exposed to insoluble objections. This is the view of the Vicar, of course, and we have to see if it is the view of Rousseau; we have still to see that.

Student: The first of the principles which you cited was the Vicar’s principle to believe falsehood rather than not believe; and Emile has, up until a few pages ago . . .

LS: No, that I meant by the bias of the Vicar; the Vicar wants to have some certainty regardless of whether it is open to objections or not. Now, a very important passage occurs on page 232, in the third paragraph. Here now, the argument begins; and it begins in the way in which everyone, so to speak, began at that time: Descartes—*cogito [ergo] sum. J’existe*. That’s the beginning. Everything else can be doubted, but what is indubitable [is] that I, [in order] to doubt, am; because a non-being being couldn’t doubt. Read that.

Mr. Reinken: “I exist, and I have senses through which I receive impressions. This is the first truth that strikes me and I am forced to accept it. Have I any independent knowledge of my existence, or am I only aware of it through my sensations? This is my first difficulty, and so far I cannot solve it. For I continually experience sensations, either directly or indirectly through memory, so how can I know if the feeling of self is something beyond these sensations or if it can exist independently of them?”^{xxx}

LS: Now, what strikes you, of that point, on the basis of things which we have discussed on former occasions?

Student: One point, regarding the sentiment of existence: before, we said that this was prior . . .

^{xxviii} E, 567-69; 426-28.

^{xxix} E, 569; 428.

^{xxx} E, 570; 429.

LS: Yes, I think that is definitely what Rousseau teaches, in the *Reveries*, especially. So here, in other words, this—how shall I say it?—absolutization of the sentiment of existence so characteristic of Rousseau is not made by the Vicar. That is the way in which I understand it. And here, I think, is the difference; because the sentiment of existence has certain implications different from

END OF TAPE SIDE ONE

[In progress] **LS:** —I have not seen here a difference from Locke—perhaps in terms: I don't remember off-hand whether Locke calls this other, whether he coordinates this distinction with that between passive and active. This I do not know.

Student: This sounds almost like Kant.

LS: No; long before. Spinoza, Leibniz and Descartes. It may differ from Locke, but that would not yet mean a radical opposition to that. Let us turn to page 234, paragraph 2.

Mr. Reinken: “This power of my mind which brings my sensations together and compares them may be called by any name; let it be called attention, meditation, reflection, or what you will; it is still true that it is in me and not in things, that it is I alone who produce it, though I only produce it when I receive an impression from things. Though I am compelled to feel or not to feel, I am free to examine more or less what I feel. Being now, so to speak, sure of myself—”^{xxxix}

LS: Yes; now here is a paragraph which is missing from the translation. Would you read that?

Mr. Reinken: “I am not, therefore, simply a sensitive and passive being, but a being which is active and intelligent; and, whatever philosophy may say about it, I dare to pretend to the honor of thinking about it.”

LS: “of thinking,” period. A thinking, not merely sensing being. Yes.

Mr. Reinken: “I know only that truth is in things and not in my own spirit which judges them, and that the less I put of my own in judgments which I have on them, the more I am sure of approaching the truth: thus my rule is to deliver myself more to sentiment than to reason, and it is confirmed by reason itself.”^{xxxix}

LS: Yes. This was, I believe, the passage on which you based your argument; [inaudible]. But first, Mr. Lane, what was your point?

Mr. Lane: I don't think I have a point. The distinction between passive things and active things: I guess that would be Locke, but the notion of the impression seems to me to go beyond Locke. The simple . . . everything passive would be binding to abstraction

^{xxxix} E, 573; 431.

^{xxxix} E, 573; 431-32.

LS: I see; and the impression would be an act. Well, I simply do not remember now Locke. The presentation in Hume is rather that what he calls ideas in contradistinction to impressions are decayed impressions;^{xxxiii} so, there is no act involved here. I do not remember . . .

Student: He accepted Hume, but didn't accept Locke.

LS: Yes, good. By the way, Mr. Butterworth, do you know why the translation omitted this paragraph?

Mr. Butterworth: No, there is no note here. The only thing is when he says "whatever philosophy might have to say about it," my edition has a note that he is referring to [materialism].

LS: That is extraneous information. I mean, those who need it don't need it, if I may say so. I mean, for the reader of the *Emile*, it is irrelevant; and the others would know it. So therefore it is not very interesting. Now, we approach gradually the nerve of the argument. The argument starts from the fact that matter is unmoved. Matter as matter is unmoved; therefore the cause of motion cannot be found in matter. The only thing of which we know that they have an intrinsic principle of motion is man. But animals probably also have spontaneous motion, as he developed in that time. And now he reaches the conclusion, on page 235, paragraph 4.

Mr. Reinken: "The first causes of motion are not to be found in matter; matter receives and transmits motion, but does not produce it. The more I observe the action and reaction of the forces of nature playing on one another, the more I see that we must always go back from one effect to another, till we arrive at a first cause in some will—"

LS: Yes, in some *will*. Because we see that the only self-moving being we know certainly, man, the motion goes back to an act of will. Yes.

Mr. Reinken: "for to assume an infinite succession of causes is to assume that there is no first cause. In a word, no motion which is not caused by another motion can take place, except by a spontaneous, voluntary action; inanimate bodies have no action but motion, and there is no real action without will. This is my first principle. I believe, therefore, that there is a will which sets the universe in motion and gives life to nature. This is my first dogma, or the first article of my creed."^{xxxiv}

LS: Yes; and now let us turn immediately to the second paragraph on page 237.

Mr. Reinken: "If matter in motion points me to a will, matter in motion according to fixed laws points me to an intelligence; that is the second article of my creed. To act, to compare, to choose, are the operations of an active, thinking being; so this being exists. Where do you find him existing, you will say? Not merely in the revolving heavens, nor in the sun which gives us light,

^{xxxiii} David Hume, *An Enquiry Concerning Human Understanding*, Section 2, paragraph 3.

^{xxxiv} *E*, 576; 433-34.

not in myself alone, but in the sheep that grazes, the bird that flies, the stone that falls, and the leaf blown by the wind.”^{xxxv}

LS: Yes; now these are the first two dogmas, and they give already a sufficient indication of what the Profession is about: it is a demonstration of the existence of God. Now, how would one have to describe it in terms of the various demonstrations which have been suggested throughout the ages—I mean, simply placing it historically, first: what is it? I mean, the argument is twofold, isn’t it, concerning the dogmas: first, concerning the origin of motion; and the second concerns the orderliness of the whole. The second is the teleological argument: there is an ordered universe, and order points to an intelligent orderer. The first doesn’t speak of intelligence, as you see; it speaks only of will. Now, what is the first? That is also a very well-known one, although not necessarily in this form. Mr. Mueller?

Mr. Mueller: Who did make this argument this way? Not Aristotle.

LS: Sure: [*proton kinoun*].

Mr. Mueller: But not a first mover in time.

LS: That is another question; but it is . . . no, in Aristotle, it is not a first mover in time. You mean here it is in time. In Aristotle it is not in time.

Student: Yes. Vertical . . .

LS: Yes, sure; but it is modified on the basis of modern science, but fundamentally the argument [is] that motion, the motion points to a first mover, to a first mover who in Aristotle, of course, must be unmoved—but that is not made clear here. But it is, of course, also the Platonic argument; the Platonic argument that all motion which we find ordinarily—falling stone, or whatever it may be—is motion of things which have no principle of motion in themselves. And we have then to go back, in order to understand motion, to beings which are self-moved; and that means all motion of bodies is secondary compared with all motion of souls. That is the Platonic argument, in the *Laws*,^{xxxvi} and also elsewhere. And these things are here combined.

Student: When did Hume write?

LS: Earlier. I mean, it depends what you mean: the⁹ [*Dialogues on*] *Natural Religion* were published posthumously, much later than this; but the other writings of Hume were earlier.

Student: No, I mean the religious [dialogues].

LS: Yes, that was published posthumously, in 1779, or so.

Student: I think it is very evident that Hume couldn’t come to bear at this point, because initially the Vicar is still categorically ruling out skepticism, which is a direct denial of any . . .

^{xxxv} *E*, 578; 435.

^{xxxvi} *Laws*, 894b-895b.

LS: Yes, surely. But we must not forget, at that time some knowledge of the arguments, both of the great philosophers of the eighteenth¹⁰ century and of the [inaudible] arguments were still very common. I mean, *the* equivalent of the *Encyclopedia Britannica*—or what do you have today—where unlearned people get their information about objects of learning—there are some other things of this kind, I imagine—was at that time the big dictionary of Pierre Bayle, *Dictionnaire philosophique*. And now, in Bayle you find [LS writes on the blackboard] all the details of the demonstration of the existence of God, well, buried, because . . . the article is gossipy. I dimly remember there is an article on Zabarella—an Italian, obviously; I do not know what he did, and he seems to be completely forgotten today^{xxxvii}—but in note *f*, or whatever it is,^{xxxviii} to the article on Zabarella, you find a beautiful history of the ontological argument. But at that time people *knew* this Zabarella remark *f* of the ontological argument, and in other articles there, you could easily People knew that. So Hume did not need Rousseau, and Rousseau did not need Hume: these things were well-known. And then one would have to have a *very* special reason for assuming any dependence either way *in this matter*, regarding the knowledge of the arguments, of the demonstration of the existence of God.

Now, we leave it at that, because we are now concerned with what is characteristic of the Savoyard Vicar rather than with what he shares with earlier teachers. For example, this beginning of motion, that there must be one, that is the famous story of Descartes: Descartes needs a God to give the universe the *chiquenaude*^{xxxix}—what is that in English? In English, the push. The whole genesis of the world becomes intelligible on mechanical grounds once you can account for the initial push; and for this push, Descartes needs God—that is the same thing, will. So, we must see where does the Vicar deviate from generally known arguments. I do not know whether this combination was very common; I couldn't say. In Kant's presentation, the three arguments which are most important are, [first], the ontological proof—which is not used here at all; the proof, you know, that a most perfect being must exist, because existence is one of the perfections, so it is a self-contradiction to say that a most perfect being doesn't exist; the second is the cosmological proof, starting from the contingency of the world, which calls for a necessary being which is in no way contingent; and the third is the teleological, from the good order of the universe toward an intelligent cause. Now, Rousseau uses neither the ontological nor the cosmological proof, but a modified argument from motion plus the teleological proof. And I would assume that Rousseau thought these are the two most easily intelligible proofs, the most popular proofs. Otherwise they would not fulfill the function they are supposed to fulfill. There is another point on the top of page 238, in the middle. This is still a continuation of the teleological argument, that the universe and the beings in it cannot have come into being by fortuitous or accidental causation.

Mr. Reinken: “If organized bodies had come together fortuitously in all sorts of ways before assuming settled forms, if stomachs are made without mouths, feet without heads, hands without arms, imperfect organs of every kind which died because they could not preserve their life, why do none of these imperfect attempts now meet our eyes—?”^{xl}

^{xxxvii} Giacomo Zabarella (1533-1589), a Renaissance philosopher and logician.

^{xxxviii} In note G.

^{xxxix} In Pascal's characterization (*Pensées* 77).

^{xl} *E*, 579; 436.

LS: Has anyone any notion what this comes from?

Student: Empedocles^{xli}.

LS: Empedocles, yes, very good, or Lucretius.^{xlii} So, these were old Greek statements about coming into being of order out of chaos without an intelligent cause. By the way, how did they try to solve this difficulty; why do we not see stomachs—how does he put it?—stomachs without mouths today, whereas they have existed at the beginning?

Student: They weren't viable

LS: Then they could still come into being today, but they would perish again. No; in the first period, owing to the condition at the beginning, particular heat or whatever it was, all kinds of things happened which do not happen in later periods—this is what I had in mind. But this only in passing. Much more important is what we find on page 239, in the second paragraph.

Mr. Reinken: “I believe, therefore that the world is governed by a wise and powerful will; I see it or rather I feel it, and it is important to me^{xliii} to know this. But has this same world always existed, or has it been created? Is there one source of all things? Are there two or many? What is their nature? I know not; and what concern is it of mine? When these things become of importance to me I will try to learn them; till then I abjure these idle speculations, which may trouble my peace, but cannot affect my conduct nor be comprehended by my reason.”

LS: “which may trouble my peace,” you said? “*Mon amour-propre*.” Or are there two readings? No. So again, she will be rusticated. Now, let us go on.

Mr. Reinken: “Recollect that I am not preaching my own opinion but explaining it. Whether matter is eternal or created, whether its origin is passive or not—”

LS: No: “whether there is a passive principle or whether there is none.” That is the same as the question of whether . . . as the first question. If matter is eternal, there is a passive principle independent of the active principle, God.

Mr. Reinken: “It is still certain that the whole is one, and that it proclaims a single intelligence; for I see nothing that is not part of the same ordered system, nothing which does not cooperate to the same end, namely, the conservation of all within the established order. This being who wills and can perform his will, this being active through his own power, this being, whoever he may be, who moves the universe and orders all things, is what I call God.”^{xliv}

LS: Yes; in brief, God is *the* thinking and willing and powerful being. Now, here we have a clear deviation of the Savoyard Vicar from the accepted doctrine. He does not assert the eternity of

^{xli} *Fragments* 57-61.

^{xlii} *On the Nature of the Universe*, 5:836-46 (1994, 150).

^{xliii} “Important to me,” being the transcriber’s or reader’s sensible emendation of Foxley’s “a great thing.”

^{xliv} *E*, 580-81; 437.

God alone. He leaves it open whether there cannot be eternity of matter. And now, in the first statement of the question he says, is there a single principle of things, that could mean strict monotheism, or are there two or more? This could mean at first hearing, is there not more than one god? After all, theoretically there could be a body of gods, an assembly of gods who could rule the universe, perhaps with a highest god. But he narrows it down later to the question of two principles, God and eternal matter. He does not assert it; but he does not exclude it: he says it is a question of no importance to him. Now, this is of course a gross overstatement. It must be of the greatest importance to him. But what is the advantage of the eternity of matter?

Student: Isn't that in the *Letter to Beaumont*, where he says, you get into this question about creating the world, creation, creating something out of nothing?

LS: That we come . . . But here is a more specific statement, in the Garnier edition of the *Letter to Beaumont*, on page 462: "The co-existence of these two principles seems to explain better the construction of the universe; and to remove difficulties which one removes without it not easily, as among others that of the origin of evil."^{xlv}

That is the point. In other words, if there is one principle, God, then God would seem to be also the author of evil—of everything, and thus of evil. And then of course the monotheistic answer, as you know, is to say, no, the origin of evil is in creatures, angels or men; and this leads to further difficulties. Whereas if you say that there is a second principle, matter, which limits the power of God,¹¹ [then] therefore his work cannot be as good as he wills it. Now, this was very famous traditionally as the Manichean doctrine [LS writes on the Blackboard]—from Manes—in the early Christian centuries, if I remember well; but it goes back to Persian dualism, Zoroastrian . . . and it was reasserted as theoretically best by Bayle in his *Dictionary*,^{xlvi} to which I referred before, and reasserted in a somewhat subtle manner by Voltaire in his *Candide*—because there are two men: a Leibnizian who is a monotheist and another man whose name is, what, Pangloss, Martin is the other man. And he says everything is the best of all possible worlds—that is what Pangloss says—and then of course there are many evils and, you know, that's very funnily described. The alternative is Martin, and Martin asserts a dualism; and so he can account for evil by tracing it to a special principle. And Martin is incidentally a man who had worked for ten years for the booksellers in Amsterdam. Now, everyone at that time knew that this was Bayle. Bayle had . . . strictly he was a Frenchman by birth, but left France because of the Edict of Nantes and earned his living as a writer in Amsterdam; and so that was he. So, this was at that time quite well known, this doctrine, to informed people.^{xlvii}

By the way, the ultimate origin of this doctrine in the philosophic tradition is Plato himself: in the tenth book of the *Laws*,^{xlviii} in the demonstration of the existence of God, and the discussion of teleology, two souls are mentioned, a good soul and a bad soul. And there are other remarks in

^{xlv} Rousseau, 2001, 44.

^{xlvi} See the articles on the Manichees, the Paulicians, and the Marcionites, in which Bayle, at least acknowledges that the dualistic argument is no less defensible than the orthodox argument.

^{xlvii} Martin is introduced in Chapter 19 as an Amsterdam bookseller and describes himself as a Manichean in Chapter 20 (Voltaire, *Candide, Zadig, and Other Stories*, trans. Donald Frame (New York: New American Library, 2001), 64-65).

^{xlviii} 896e.

Plato Well, that is a simple story, in the creation of the universe in the *Timaeus*, the Artificer creates a universe out of something which is not called matter, but which has ontologically the function of matter.^{xlix}

So, this is the view which he takes. Now, the key implication is, of course, this—there are two: if everything that is, is as it were the joint work of a good and a bad principle, man cannot be simply good. I mean, if God leads him to virtue, there is something in him *as natural* which leads him to unqualified egoism. The second implication is this: if matter is eternal, there is an eternal obstacle to the goodness of man—an eternal one—and that means—can easily be thought to mean—man’s beginnings were particularly imperfect, and that all progress was reached, beyond this period, by man’s efforts.

Student: Could you repeat that?

LS: Original badness was overcome naturally by man’s other power, the active power in himself, or, to use a later phrase, by the historical process, which is, as we have seen, the view of Rousseau—as we have seen from the *Second Discourse*. Now, you wanted me to restate something. Which? Regarding man cannot be simply good, or also that the beginnings, of course, of man must be imperfect? Whereas if God is the sole principle, man must have been created perfect, as he is according to the Biblical teaching. But if there is this twofold principle, man’s beginnings cannot possibly be perfect.

Student: You said something after that

LS: Yes: there is a natural obstacle to the goodness of man which can never be overcome; but it can be overcome to some extent by man’s effort. And man’s effort can have the character of a progress; and this is what is part of the story of the *Second Discourse*. We must proceed in an orderly manner. Mr. Butterworth.

Mr. Butterworth: I wonder if you were going to go into the *Second Discourse*—that was my question—to Rousseau’s statement in . . . I think it’s note *o*, isn’t it, where he says man is by nature good.¹

LS: Do you mean this statement which ends with a twofold appeal to one kind of people and another kind of people?

Mr. Butterworth: Yes.

LS: Yes, that is a very important note; but I do not remember now . . . I mean, I remember distinctly the two addressees: the one is a Christian and the other is an unbeliever. And the Christian is asked that he should stay in society and obey the princes, and if they are wicked to bear that with patience. And the other fellow, the unbeliever, is told to return to the woods because he, after all, is not under original sin; he can reacquire original goodness.^{li}

^{xlix} The “third kind” or “receptacle” introduced at 49a.

¹ Note I, or ix.

^{li} *SD*, 207-208; 79-80.

Student: And he is somehow a little bit stronger than the

LS: That is hard to say. I mean, it is a very rhetorical statement, but beneath the rhetoric, which appears very clear Ordinarily the writers on Rousseau don't consider this passage. A very distinguished Protestant theologian, Karl Barth, has written—as I found in a quotation; I have not read his book—that he never has found in Rousseau the statement, let's return to nature, the phrase which is so . . . *Revenons à la nature* . . . and I also haven't seen it.^{lii} But the nearest approximation to it is this passage, where the return to nature is presented as a possibility for people who do not believe in revelation.

Student: I think he also said—without being explicit, but very strongly hints at this in the¹² [*Dialogues*].

LS: This I do not remember. Mr. Nicgorski.

Mr. Nicgorski: I was wondering if this view of two independent principles is necessarily tied up with the deism which was very prominent.

LS: Oh, no. The deism was ordinarily a single principle. But it is a very vague thing, you see, because some of the people who are known as deists, appear to be deists, and at closer inspection they are something different. But deism strictly speaking would, I believe, mean the view that there is a single principle—divine, knowable by natural reason, and incompatible with revelation. That I think is the characteristic of deism. In other words, the revelation is not only uncertain, but incompatible with divine goodness; because . . . what he brings up next time, that I believe is what the Let me see: yes, Kant makes the distinction between deism and theism—but where does he do it, in the *Critique of Practical Reason*?^{liii} I do not know exactly where he makes this distinction, but I believe that is Kant's innovation—that deism is a view according to which—it is a purely theoretical view—there is an intelligent originator of the universe, no connection with human duty; and theism is with a moral implication: He is also the legislator. But as far as I know, Kant made this distinction. But this could easily be cleared up by looking up the best dictionaries in English or in French, and also in German—you know, where the words come from. As far as [where] the term deism came from, I think it stems from the seventeenth century—I know that Locke speaks of it already—and deism means here people who believe in God, but reject revelation.^{liv}

Student: Clarke who was mentioned here, wasn't he

LS: Yes, that I do not know. I mean, Clarke was connected with Newton, and they had that fight with Leibniz, partly about physics—[space] in particular—and partly on religion. But I do not know now the exact point. You know, the key point, I think, was Newton admitted space as a

^{lii} Karl Barth, *Protestant Thought from Rousseau to Ritschl*, trans. Brian Cozens (New York: Harper and Brothers, 1959), 66.

^{liii} In the *Critique of Pure Reason*, Part 2, Chapter 3, Section 7.

^{liv} The OED has the term originating in French in the sixteenth century, but it is there used in contrast to atheism and not distinguished from theism.

divine attribute—something of this kind, if I remember well—and Leibniz denied that. This I do not know; there were all kinds of things going on, naturally, at that time. I do not know.

Student: I have the feeling that the term deism and Clarke are very closely connected, somehow.

LS: Yes; but when was this exchange between Clarke and Leibniz? In the last decade of the seventeenth century?^{lv} I do not know exactly. Locke speaks in *The Reasonableness of Christianity* [1695], which is earlier,¹³ deism; and there was this . . . no, wait: what does Mersenne say—that is a famous statement—there were 20,000, 30,000, did he say deists or atheists?^{lvi} That I do not remember. That was earlier, around 1630. But Locke says there are many, many—I think he doesn't give any figure—deists in England at that time. I can only repeat, to the best of my knowledge I have now, a deist is a man who believes in a single principle, God, as the cause of everything, but that this, as a rational faith, excludes the possibility of revelation.

Student: I thought that the doctrine of two principles might be helpful to a deist who wanted to keep the relevance of a creator, of an originator, to keep that relevance ineffective in daily life.

LS: But still, I think that would have been called always something like Manichaeism, or so, at that time. I mean, Bayle wrote this, Bayle made this a key point, that natural reason left to itself would lead to Manichaeism, i.e. to the principle presented here, two principles. But then of course he made the usual bow—some people believed it, by the way, the bow which some people today take to be sincere—but this merely shows the insufficiency of reason, and therefore one has to bow to revelation. You know, that is what Bayle explicitly teaches. But he wasn't understood in this way by everyone at that time: that was regarded as a kind of . . . He had all kinds of troubles, also private troubles with other . . . He was a Calvinist in Amsterdam with others—big gossipy affairs added to the doctrinary question, as frequently happens.

Student: There seems to be a basic difference in this to Manichaeism . . . For Bayle, is it not true that this other principle is not an active principle, but a passive; that it is matter and not [inaudible]. And for the deists, since evil is not active, they describe the universe as a watch running by its perfectly regular laws, but the watchmaker has been out on lunch since . . .

LS: But did he have matter? Because that means invariably that the matter has certain characteristics—that is the way in which matter was understood. That is no longer the Aristotelian matter which as pure matter has no characteristics. But as matter, it limits Him; limits Him. And there are various forms. The matter can also be, incidentally, intelligible matter, meaning intellectual necessities, like Platonic ideas, like mathematical laws, which can also be understood to limit God; and then it comes in this other way, the whole question of divine omnipotence: is God omnipotent in the sense that he can do the logically impossible? Long

^{lv} In the early eighteenth century, 1715-16.

^{lvi} He said 50,000 atheists (in Paris alone!) in his *Quaestiones in Genesim* (1623), quoted in Roger Ariew, John Cottingham, and Tom Sorell ed., *Descartes' Meditations: Background and Source Material* (Cambridge-New York: Cambridge University Press, 1998), 137. As the editors note, "atheist" has a wider connotation in 1623 than it does now.

discussions throughout the Middle Ages and early modern times. Now, we turn to page 239, bottom.

Mr. Reinken: “Convinced of my unfitness—”

LS: “My insufficiency.”

Mr. Reinken: “I shall never reason concerning the nature of God unless I am driven to it by the feeling of his relations with myself. Such reasonings are always rash; a wise man should venture on them with trembling, he should be certain that he can never sound their abysses; for the most insolent attitude towards God is not to abstain from thinking of him, but to think badly^{lvii} about him.”^{lviii}

LS: Now, this is also an old story which itself goes back to Plutarch, but it was popularized again by Bayle; and it leads him to the question, the man who doesn’t think of God at all can be said to be a practical atheist; and the other who thinks ill of Him is the idolater, or polytheist. And here he says the atheist, the practical atheist, is better than the man who thinks wrongly of God—this I mention only in passing. He develops then in the sequel man’s unique rank on earth, or even simply, which means, are there angels or are there no angels—we have seen a passage to this effect before. And now the difficulty is of course this: man created has a high destiny; and look at how human beings behave. The order in the whole and the disorder in human things, the evil. Where is that, the paragraph which ends It must be on page 241, the end of the first paragraph: “Oh, Providence, is this the way in which you rule the world?”

Mr. Reinken: “Merciful God, where is thy Power?”

LS: “what has become of thy Power?”

Mr. Reinken: “I behold the earth, and there is evil upon it.”^{lix}

LS: So, the question of evil, then, is this. And you see on the other hand, the Vicar seems to have provided for that by his problematic admission of the eternity of matter. This is the difficulty. Now, in the next paragraph, which we must read again.

Mr. Reinken: “Would you believe it, dear friend, from these gloomy thoughts and apparent contradictions, there was shaped in my mind the sublime idea of the soul, which all my seeking had hitherto failed to discover? While I meditated upon man’s nature, I seemed to discover two distinct principles in it—”

LS: Keep this in mind, the mere verbal expression: “two distinct principles.” Yes.

Mr. Reinken: “one of them raised him to the study of the eternal truths, to the love of justice, and of true morality—”

^{lvii} The reader has amended Foxley’s translation, which has “evil” for “badly,” slightly.

^{lviii} *E*, 581; 438.

^{lix} *E*, 583; 439.

LS: “of the morally beautiful.”

Mr. Reinken: “to the regions of the world of thought, which the wise delight to contemplate; the other led him downwards to himself, made him the slave of his senses, of the passions which are their instruments, and thus opposed everything suggested to him by the former principle.”^{lx}

LS: That is all we need. So, we have seen first that in a way the Vicar admits two principles in the whole; and this would seem to lead naturally to the admission of two principles in man. And in the light of the previous discussion this would mean the two principles are both natural to man. And therefore, since the one is an evil principle, it shouldn’t be surprising that there is so much evil in the human world in particular. But here he seems to forget this, as appears in the sequel. Let us read the next paragraph.

Mr. Reinken: “Young man, hear me with confidence. I will always be honest with you. If conscience is the creature of prejudice, I am certainly wrong, and there is no such thing as a proof of morality; but if to put oneself first is an inclination natural to man, and if the first sentiment of justice is moreover inborn in the human heart, let those who say man is a simple creature remove these contradictions and I will grant that there is but one substance.”^{lxi}

LS: So, in other words, we understand now the argument a bit better. Unfortunately we cannot finish it today; time has this strange quality of running [blackboard]. So we have two principles of the universe: let us for convenience’s sake call them God and devil. Now if there are two principles in the whole, there will also be two principles in man: and the one, let us call this the innate justice, the innate principle of justice, morality; and here is the principle of selfishness, let us say egoism. That is man’s nature. This is, of course absolutely heretical compared with the prevalent teaching. And now he does something else, he rejoins the common views by the following thing: this is the principle, as it were, of the soul; and this is the principle of the body. There are two substances—and this was of course, what was taught generally, that the one God, the sole principle, has created two substances, soul and body, conscious and matter, or however they were called. Do you see? It is a very complex picture.

Student: It goes from Manichaeism to Cartesian

LS: No, that was not No, in the ordinary form this was the monotheistic doctrine, that God has created souls *and* bodies.

Student: No, he goes from Manichaeism to Cartesianism.

LS: Yes, you can put it this way, at least as Cartesianism was ordinarily understood; but more generally to a monotheistic doctrine.

Mr. Nicgorski: Does he really come out and state that both soul and body are from the same source [inaudible]? That would be crucial.

^{lx} E, 583; 440.

^{lxi} E, 583-84; 440.

LS: Well, our reporter, can you answer Mr. Niegorski's question, whether he explicitly says that God alone created both? I do not remember an explicit statement, but you must also not forget he did not explicitly say that there are these two principles: he only said maybe there are. But this is of course He is surely not convinced of monotheism—this much is clear—and he indicates that. In other words, he uses the dualism of God and devil in order not to burden God with the fact of evil—and also in a way in order not to burden man with the fact of evil, do you see that? But then he uses these things in order to bring about, via this metaphysic dualism of soul and body, a principle of morality different from selfishness. Now, perhaps I forget now about the text for a moment, because we have to finish by the end, and see Do you see what the problem is? We must keep this in mind: if there is soul and body [LS writes on the blackboard] and this is connected with justice, full dedication to the common good and this with evil So, we have two conflicting moral principles. One only is a good moral principle; the other is a bad one. But what have we learned about the problem of evil even before, before the theological section was started?

Student: [Inaudible] self-love—I've forgotten one term—pride, and virtue.

LS: I know that you are on the right track, but you have forgotten something.

Student: *Amour-propre* is the basis of morality.

LS: Well, ultimately, all passions; *all* passions go back to self-love, *amour de soi*, self-preservation. And then there is a certain complication by virtue of which *amour de soi* becomes *amour-propre*; and there, *amour-propre* means nothing but a passion constituted by regarding other men. If you are hungry—take a simple case—that is strictly in you; no comparison is needed in order to be sure that you are hungry. I mean, the others may all be non-hungry, that doesn't do away with your hunger. But in other things, comparison with others is essential for constituting the passion concerned—that is equally true of pity as of pride. Pity is also, as we have seen last time, based on comparison with others: I am better off than he, and so I can pity him. And now, pity and pride—let us assume pride is bad and pity is good, for convenience's sake [LS writes on the blackboard]—so, this stems from the same single root called self-preservation. Now, Rousseau admits that pity is not universally good: there is a kind of foolish pity. But how are you enabled to distinguish between a reasonable pity and foolish pity? Answer: by generalization—you remember that—this passage which in many respects sounds so awkward—pity with the human race in general, and only in the light of this universal pity apply your pity in a particular case.^{lxii} In other words, you have a strictly monistic derivation of morality from the sole thing called *amour de soi*, self-love, the egoistic principle in itself. In other words, altruism is a modification of egoism. I mean, the moral teaching as presented prior to the Profession of Faith does not require two principles; and the Vicar presents the moral problem as requiring two principles—a principle of vice on the one hand, of virtue on the other—and corresponding to the metaphysical dualism of body—merely myself—and soul, which can embrace the whole.

^{lxii} *E*, 547; 409.

Student: Is it fair to say that it's very definite that the moral teaching prior to the Profession of Faith is based on one principle? The reason I ask this is because if you take the *Second Discourse*, in the Preface Rousseau says that two things that are most natural to man are self-preservation and compassion; the two things that are most natural to found natural right—and that's to man and to animals—are self-preservation and compassion.^{lxiii} And it's only later in the footnote, which is sort of a rewrite, that he puts in this thing about *amour-propre* and all the passions anchored to, coming out of *amour de soi*. So, the reason that there is this conflict of dualism is

LS: Yes, but this is not so Let us now grant it for argument's sake; there is no question as far as the analysis of the passions is concerned, the *Emile* is a much more elaborate work than the *Second Discourse*; and according to very general principles of interpretation, one must say that in case of a conflict of the *Second Discourse* and the *Emile*, the *Emile* has the right of way, because when he wrote the *Emile* he knew everything he knew when he wrote the *Second Discourse*, but the opposite is not true; this is clear. So, I think I would say of Rousseau's psychology, the chief source is the *Emile* and not any other thing. Of course, one must know the other works too, but here that is what he means.

Student: What would this do to his natural right teaching, then: the point that his natural right teaching rests on two principles, whereas

LS: This could still be . . . that is not fundamentally changed compared with the *Second Discourse*, because why does he need these two principles? Because if we had only self-preservation, and not pity, we would have no reason to have any consideration of others.

Student: Right.

LS: Now, Rousseau says then—later on—when pity decays with the decay of the state of nature,¹⁴ there must be another principle taking the place of it. Now, what is that? The general will. But what is the general will? The general will is the generalized particulars. To come back to my simple example, the particular will is not to pay any tax. Then you generalize it and say, no one should pay taxes. And then you see that what you will is foolish and abandon it; otherwise you are a fool, but—in other words, rational selfishness makes pity superfluous. Rational selfishness means a selfishness modified by the fact that we have to live in society—a thing which even Capone would admit, only he is not logical enough to see what it means to be dependent on other people working, and he thinks he can have the cake and eat it. And for some time this works, as we know, but there is no intrinsic reasonableness in the project.

Student: But the thing I'm getting at is that on the basis of this latter statement and also that footnote, which I think is very important, couldn't we go back and say that even in this first thing that pity really owes its being to self-preservation?

LS: Yes, you can. But it is not as clearly developed, the doctrine regarding pity. I mean, as stated there, it is absolutely untenable, because it means that the natural man, this orangutan, has more feeling of pity than the most civilized man, which is plainly absurd. I mean, Rousseau had to

^{lxiii} *SD*, 125-26; 14-15.

change, and already in this writing shortly after the *Second Discourse*, on the *Origin of Languages*, I believe, there he modifies it already.^{lxiv} And I think here we have his mature statement on this.

Now, let me just summarize it as this. Here we have two principles in man: preferring himself to everything else, mere egoism—and this would seem to go back to matter—and the first sentiment of justice, which is innate, would seem to go back to God. But now, the thought takes this turn: man is not No, this would imply also that man is of course not responsible for that egoism, because it belongs to his natural constitution. I mean, his natural constitution being made by the good and bad cosmic principles together. This is, however, not the conclusion which the Savoyard Vicar draws. The conclusion which he draws is this: the two principles in man, selfishness and non-selfishness, are understood by him, are traced by him to the two substances, body and soul. And from this it follows that willing, i.e. rational desire, i.e. virtuous desire, has its root in the soul; and passion has its root in the body—this is developed in the sequel. And then, of course, the great question arises, if the will, as rational desire, is virtuous desire, that means there cannot be a bad will: another difficulty, which he takes up on page 243.^{lxv}

But forgive me if I just call it a day at this moment—we cannot finish the discussion of this very important section anyway today; we will have time next time when Mr. Nicgorski reads his paper, because there the thoughts are much . . . you know, they are fairly simple, and so I hope No, in the meeting afterward we have a very brief assignment, so let us say by the end of next Tuesday we will have caught up again.

END OF LECTURE

¹ Deleted “there is a difference.”

² Deleted “that.”

³ Deleted “*Treatise on Education*.”

⁴ Deleted “things.”

⁵ Deleted “that.”

⁶ Deleted “opinion.”

⁷ Deleted “he.”

⁸ Deleted “*rejambe*.”

⁹ Deleted “*Dialectics of*.”

¹⁰ Deleted second “eighteenth.”

¹¹ Deleted “and.”

^{lxiv} Rousseau 1998, 305-306.

^{lxv} *E*, 586; 442.

¹² Deleted “dialogue.”

¹³ Deleted “speaks of.”

¹⁴ Deleted “then.”

Session 12

Leo Strauss: First I want to thank you and Mr. Boyan for giving me these excerpts from the encyclopedias which show that what I said last time about deism is correct. I mean, some frills are there, but the main point is this: deism means the recognition of a thinking and willing god as the cause of the universe, knowable by the unassisted human reason, and the rejection of revealed religion on this basis. This, I think, is the key point.

Now, let me return. First, the externals. Youⁱ have been misguided by our M.A. by speaking of *Sophronisque*. The father of Socrates was called Sophroniscus. Now, in French of course it is *Sophronisque*, and she didn't know that. Another reason for whipping her.

The second point is minor, very trivial: the formula was *cuius regio, eius religio*, and it was, as far as I remember, much earlier than the Peace of Westphalia: in the Peace of Augsburg, 1555, or so. Well, that is trivial.

Now, let us turn to the more serious matters. You have made many excellent remarks, but one point You said Emile must accept some positive religion, that is your impression?

Mr. Nicgorski: Yes.

LS: I just wanted to make sure; we have to take this up later.

I have to bring up a few of the points you made, because we may not be able today to come to a discussion of your assignment, because we have such a leftover of last time. Regarding the geographic boundaries of religion as an objection to revelation as universal revelation; have you heard of that before? Mr. Mueller, you seem to know something of that.

Student: I was thinking of Pascal.

LS: No, he didn't refer to that. No: Montesquieu, in his *Spirit of the Laws*, when he speaks of Christianity limited to the Western world and Islam to a more Eastern world; you know, that there are natural obstacles to the spread of any religion.ⁱⁱ And you will find even when you go back, you will find the same thought, for example, alluded to at any rate, in Marsilius of Padua's *Defender of the Peace*; that is an old story.ⁱⁱⁱ One can say, I believe, that the notion of a universal society is of revealed religious origin, and not of philosophic origin. I think the philosophers always assumed that there can only be particular societies. I studied it somewhere in the Islamic

ⁱ Mr. Nicgorski, who is named on p. 306 as assigned to give the paper for this session. Although more than one students was sometimes assigned a paper for an individual seminar, the reference at the end of this session (p. 332) to the material Nicgorski's paper covered, combined with the discussion here, shows that Strauss is talking about Nicgorski's paper.

ⁱⁱ Montesquieu, 1989, Book 16, Chapter 2, p. 265.

ⁱⁱⁱ *Defender of the Peace*, I, 5.11; I, 17.10.

Middle Ages, where this was quite discussed, and this is the conclusion I reached. Mr. Mahdi^{iv} will know much more about this than I do.

Then you said something about the anthropomorphic god, anthropomorphistic god, as essential to revealed religion.

Mr. Nicgorski: I didn't myself say that it was essential to revealed religion, but just indicated it was one of the main arguments in this book by the Vicar and Rousseau, but not [inaudible]. They seem to say *if* it is essential.

LS: Yes, it occurred to me when reading the *Emile* this time that when Rousseau speaks of *l'homme de la nature* in opposition to *l'homme de l'homme*—man of nature, man of man—that this had something to do with that. The natural man versus the man as understood in the light of an anthropomorphistically conceived god. This I may mention in passing.

Now, the points you made regarding the unsatisfactory character of the Vicar's argument. Of course, in fairness to Rousseau, one would have to compare the thesis of Christianity, and especially of Catholic Christianity, as stated by the Vicar, to compare with how the contemporary Catholic polemicists, like the archbishop of Paris, stated it. I mean, as far as I remember, the Archbishop of Paris did not object to the ordinary understanding of no salvation outside of the church. I mean, one would have to study that.

But these are all minor points. I come now to a more important point, and that is the issue of Protestantism and Catholicism. How did Rousseau understand Protestantism? I think that appears rather clearly from the *Letters Written from the Mountain*, which is addressed to the Genevans; and the view of Protestantism is the one which I think we all learned in school—because I went to a school in a Protestant country—which is, the big thing which the Reformation made was the emancipation of the individual judgment, universal priesthood.^v That means that everyone has as much right to interpret the Bible as everyone else; there is no ecclesiastical authority proper. So, still here in Protestantism this was, of course—in Luther and Calvin—to say the least bound up with the belief in the divine character of the Biblical text. And then there came this development, once you grant the principle of the individual, each Christian is as good a judge as everyone else, then the other questions came up; for example, the text: is the text reliable? You know, the variant readings and all the other things. Well, everyone can judge it. And what remained then? The Dutch had a proverb, *geen ketter sonder letter*, no heretic without a letter—of the church. And finally it became simply that Protestantism proper changed into simple rationalism: everyone is a judge by virtue of his natural reason, and whether he accepts the Bible or not depends again on the outcome of his reasoning—you know, whether the ordinary proofs, like miracles, reliable tradition and so on, hold up or not. This is a view which Rousseau takes for granted; in other words, not It is surely not the Protestantism of Calvin's *Institutes*. It has been watered down very much—I mean a large part of Protestantism at that time was, of course, rationalistic, more or less. But the key point, I believe, is this—that will appear when we look forward: Rousseau was in a way surely a democrat.

^{iv} Mushin Mahdi, then in the department of Near Eastern Languages and Civilization at the University of Chicago and an authority on, among many other things, medieval Arabic and Islamic political philosophy.

^v Rousseau, 2001, 154.

Now, democracy requiring, meaning, equality, and in a way, as is indicated by the equality of the vote, equality of judgment, the right of judgment. In the strictly secular doctrine, it is very clear; when you take Hobbes: everyone is as entitled to pass judgment on the means to his self-preservation as everyone else, the fool as well as the prudent man. Now, if this is formally the principle of democracy this would apply of course to all other matters, all matters of public import, let me say—I mean, no one would say it regarding shoe-making or physics—but all matters of public import. Now, religion is obviously a matter of public import, and therefore there cannot be any religious authorities; therefore the primarily anti-Catholic implication, naturally, because of the existence of the magisterial. The Protestant ecclesiastical authorities—at leastⁱ the continental forms of Protestants, Lutherism and Calvinism—you know, these were strictly speaking ecclesiastical authorities: the synods, and whatever they had. And this is, of course, a question alive up to the present day in this country, the question, is democracy compatible with any authority not derivative from the people? Religious authority by definition is not derivative from the people. This is, I think, a point which one must keep in mind here.

You made a point which is connected with that, that natural religion creates the same problem eventually as revealed religion, if I understood you correctly. And I understood you to mean that because not all men will be convinced by natural religion, and let us take the clearest case, atheists: do not atheists have the same right as the followers of the Vicar? So, in other words, while the Vicar will be willing to tolerate all people who make additions to natural religion—Catholics, Protestants, Jews, or whatever it may be—must he not also tolerate people who make subtractions from it? Is this not the question you meant? And then you arrived at the view which is now, of course, very common: that political society has no right whatever regarding religious matters, no right whatever; and separation of Church and State in the most strict construction would be the consequence. This is true, but Rousseau would of course say this: natural religion is so much an evident necessity for civil society, that what is true of revealed religion is not true of natural religion. You can have a decent society of deists as well as of Christians, and, he would say, even more than of Christians; but you cannot have a decent society of atheists, and therefore civil society is entitled and even obliged to establish a civil religion; which is exactly what he says in the famous last chapter of the *Social Contract* on civil religion.^{vi} Do you agree to that?

Mr. Nicgorski: Yes; and there is another point, that natural religion can² itself be universalistic, and can consequently create the same problems for political society that Christianity does.

LS: Oh, yes; that is what he discusses most emphatically in a passage in the *Letters from the Mountain*, where he speaks of the opposition between humanity and patriotism; do you mean that?^{vii} That is true, that is quite correct; we have not considered that.

Mr. Nicgorski: So that this is one of the things that disturbs him most about Catholicism in France, and likewise, this natural religion is somewhat subject to that.

^{vi} The eighth chapter of Book IV, not the last technically, because there is a very brief, concluding, ninth chapter.

^{vii} Rousseau, 2001, 149.

LS: No, that is not merely the question of Catholicism, but the question of Christianity in *any* interpretation; because clearly the morality of the New Testament is meant to be a universal morality. I mean, there are many things, and therefore the argument of the last chapter on civil religion in the *Social Contract* is roughly this: the right kind of thing is to have a particular religion, each society, each *polis* having its own religion—so, the clear-cut differences, you know, when you go to another city, you worship other gods—so, religion and patriotism are identical, and that is the closest social form possible; but this, he says, leads to cruelty, because there is no bond whatever between members of different cities. So you take a universal religion, Christianity: humanitarian, and not essentially warlike, bloody, sanguine; but then, Rousseau says, this weakens patriotism, you know, because the bond, the extra-political bond, the trans-political bond, is at least as strong as the political bond. And with some hemming and hawing he arrives at the conclusion there must be something which is Yes, in addition, of course, also dualism of powers he mentions here. If there are two Under Christian conditions you get a distinction in one way or another, a distinction between powers temporal and powers spiritual, and this weakens the sovereignty of the body politic. And therefore the final solution is then what he calls civil religion, which is in substance that what we have in the Protestant Vicar. But the question of the conflict between patriotism and humanism, humanitarianism, is not discussed then any more there. That remains. And therefore the ambiguity in Rousseau: on the one hand he sees a solution in a kind of league of nations, so that the sovereign states are become members of one universal society, so the patriotism is no longer warlike: the present day solution, at least in the opinion of some men, you know? And the alternative, however, is a very warlike nationalism. Both pacifism—if we can call that pacifism, meaning an international organization comprising all states—and the alternative, a very tough nationalism, both are considered theoretically on an equal level by Rousseau.

Student: But doesn't he really come down on the side of nationalism? I mean, he talks about universal man and the universal religion, but always sort of leading to

LS: Yes, and especially given the possibilities at the time. Sure, I mean both But simply taken as a theoretical case, one can say that both the United Nations people and the anti-United Nations people can equally find a source in Rousseau. This is the least I wanted to say.

Now, you spoke then of the context, and you stated very well: the immediate context is the question of how to control the sexual passions. And the religion preached by the Vicar is meant to be *the* instrument for that—and Rousseau meant this seriously, I have no doubt about that. But as you are surely aware³, this does not imply that the Profession of Faith is *true*. I mean, something may be conducive to a pedagogic political purpose without being true, obviously. Are you aware of that?

Mr. Nicgorski: When Rousseau was going through that first fable on the fox and the crow, he said something similar to what he says at the end of the Profession: he said—at one point—this is the way to show your student how to reason, at one point in discussing the fable. And then of course at the end of the Profession he says, this is the way to show Emile how to reason about religious matters. Except, the one difference is that in the fable he has the student make judgments, and at least ostensibly at the end of the Profession, he has Emile make no judgment;

he doesn't try to lead him to a judgment as he does within the fable.^{viii} I wasn't able to make anything of that, but the parallel language was very interesting.

LS: Yes, now, perhaps I can answer—I do not quite know whether I quite understood what you said—by taking up the question, to which you also referred, of the broader context; I mean, not the immediate context of sex, but the broader context of the whole book. Now, this broad context, as you remember, is [LS writes on the Blackboard]—they are extremely stingy with chalk here—you remember at the beginning, he stated the problem in the form of an insoluble difficulty: man and the citizen. This is what Plato did in the *Republic*, to show how the citizen [inaudible], and what Lycurgus did in practice, in Sparta: absolute subordination of the individual to the political society. And the alternative is the education of *man*, as a non-political and strictly speaking a non-social being. And this is what he is going to do in the *Emile*. And he asserts that they cannot possibly be combined, and I believe he means that. But a *certain* combination is possible, and that is shown in the *Emile*: Emile, after all—we have seen this before—is meant to become a leader in a republican society, that we have seen. So, in other words, this man educated for an apolitical life is to fulfill political functions.

Now, it is in this connection, it seems to me, that the Profession of Faith is crucially important. The Profession of Faith, precisely as a political or civil religion, serves the purpose of bridging the gulf between man and the citizen, between the individual and society. The individual as individual is concerned exclusively with his own well-being—on the highest level, maybe, on the level of the perfectly virtuous man, but only for the sake of *his* perfection, and only accidentally as far as it affects others. Now, that man should prefer the *common* good to his own good requires a radical change in man, what Rousseau calls, in an extreme statement, that man must be denatured, *dénaturé*, in order to become a citizen. Now, how is this denaturation—how would one translate this into English?

Student: Denaturalization.

LS: Really? How does one use it in chemistry? Denatured? All right. Now, we have a statement by Rousseau about that in the *Social Contract*, the chapter on the legislator. The legislator is a man—you know, the great legislator—is a man who transforms men out of men into citizens; and he does it by using the gods: that the common good is higher than the private good becomes convincing only on the basis of belief in gods.^{ix} Any gods will do, as the legislator chapter implies, but there are differences; and [considering] the politic choice, prudent choice, Rousseau prefers from that point of view the monotheism of the Savoyard Vicar. [Blackboard] Here the bridge is made by the Profession of Faith; but here is where the difficulty comes in: who is Emile? What kind of a fellow is he? Rousseau has repeatedly said that.

Student: An ordinary man.

^{viii} No individual passage, as far as I know, quite answers to the description the student offers—perhaps the student has run together two discussions of fables (*E*, 351-57, 540-42; 248-53, 403-405). The passage at the end of the Profession is at *E*, 635; 481. [Ed.]

^{ix} Rousseau, 1994, 2.7, pp. 155-57.

LS: *Un homme vulgaire*, an ordinary man. So, this solution, this reconciliation is possible only for men not from the top drawer. For the men from the top drawer, the antagonism remains; and that means the solitary dreamer—Rousseau, as he presents himself in the *Rêveries du Promeneur Solitaire*—he remains He is not a citizen; he is a man. I mean, legally he is a citizen, but he is in the deepest sense not [a citizen]. [He is] a man. There is a remark—I don't know whether I remember that—he calls himself a useless citizen; he admits that he was a useless citizen.^x But a useless citizen is, from the point of view of the city, a scoundrel, as he says. So, in other words, from a political point of view, from a citizen's point of view, Rousseau admits to be a very questionable fellow. But he denies the ultimacy of the political evaluation, and he would probably argue as follows [LS writes on the blackboard]: only this solitary dreamer, who is eccentric to political society—solitary—is the only man able to give the best advice to political society. So he is in a way a benefactor of mankind, he claims to be; but he is it by virtue of not being strictly speaking a citizen.

Now, when one uses these extreme terms used by Rousseau, one cannot recognize well-known phenomena so easily, but what he has in mind is something with which we all have become familiar. I do not know whether the right words occur to me now. I mean, liberal democracy as it developed after Rousseau has incorporated much of Rousseau, but also has deviated in many respects. And the ordinary view today is of course that there is no fundamental conflict between the individual and the citizen, *no* conflict. There is perfect freedom of speech, as they say—anything can be preached by anybody—and a civil religion or any other thing of this kind is impossible. Not even agreement regarding fundamentals is required according to the tough liberal doctrine—you know, that was an older formula: you must have agreement regarding fundamentals—they say no, you need only agreement regarding procedures—have you not heard that view?—agreement regarding procedures, that you will elect a government every four years, and this kind of thing, and what comes out of it, we accept anything which comes out of that mill; you have heard that. Now, this seems to be a complete solution of the political problem and all the difficulties which Rousseau sensed; all the contradictions which he sensed have disappeared. But even There is still something in that society which reminds of the problem, and this is somehow There is a certain group of men in that society,⁴ [who] are in a way at the top, and in another way very marginal. I don't mean intellectuals, this is much too general, because according to my understanding of the term, every clerk in a factory or in an administration building is an intellectual because he lives from reading and writing, doesn't he? That is, I think, what they mean by an intellectual, and so that is much too general; and let us therefore speak of the artist. What is the artist? According to one very well known definition, he is the critic of society, the conscience of society. Think of what people say about Steinbeck, and the *Death of a Salesman*—Miller? I haven't read it; I read about these things only in the Sun Times edition, but I believe Occasionally I ask people who did read these things and they tell me that I understood them correctly, so I have never a need for reading these books themselves. So, in one way these men are being the conscience of society—which is in a way much more than the President—and in another way they are really marginal; this is, I think, a reflection in liberal society Or think of a figure like Bertrand Russell, who sends telegrams to Khrushchev and Kennedy; in one way an extremely marginal man—well, as he himself would be the first to admit: [a] non-conformist Oh, yes, liberal democracy as we have it now believes that it is perfectly possible to integrate the non-conformist into a fundamentally

^x In the Sixth Walk (Rousseau, 2000, 56).

conformist society—because every society is to some extent conformist; that is the point. Rousseau saw it is not possible: genuine non-conformism *cannot* be integrated into society, which as such is to some degree surely conformist. We believe it is possible to eat the cake and have it: to have the necessary cohesion, and yet to have, so to speak, an infinitely open way of non-conformism. Rousseau saw a difficulty here; very simply stated: society requires agreement regarding fundamentals, but these fundamentals are not necessarily true and just. There must therefore be people who can question them, and therefore, therewith improve society. There is no possible solution. I mean, if you say there is a First Amendment guaranteeing open examination of the fundamental agreement, then everyone will do it—do you see that?—and this is impossible. But on the other hand you cannot say, you cannot have a law [that says that] only men of the first order may engage in that criticism, because that is not a legal expression. How will the administrators pick these men? So then that would lead to a highly absurd procedure; they would have to wait two or three generations after the death of these men before they can know which men should have this special standing. Did I make it clear what the issue is? In other words, I emphasize this point for one reason:⁵ I think the deepest human vice—for all practical purposes—is to believe that you can eat the cake and have it. And naturally our society today believes as much in this possibility as any other society.

But men like Rousseau are useful, whatever the truth of their particular assertions is, because they remind us of the hard edges which cannot be [eliminated]—and this, it seems to me, is the fundamental problem as Rousseau saw it, that there must be social authority which cannot be legally limited, and yet men, the human race, would perish if there were no way of criticizing it. There is no legal solution for the problem [inaudible] indicated; and therefore, I mean, it is—how impossible a legal situation is [is] indicated by the illegality committed in that book. Mr. Schrock.

Mr. Schrock: The characteristic of the solitary dreamer, or Rousseau, is not so much reason as it is exalted feeling, or sentiment, is it? Or the artist as critic is revolted; his emotions are involved. The reason that I mention this is that in the *First Discourse* he mentions a similar function performed by men of reason strictly—Bacon, Descartes, and Newton—as standing off, or perhaps standing in the court of kings—I don't know—and advising or criticizing. But they are men of reason. In other words, he seems to have departed from . . .

LS: Yes, but then. The question comes up which we have discussed last time: can you identify Rousseau with the Savoyard Vicar, do you see? I mean, the theology of the Savoyard Vicar is based, say, more on sentiment than on reason. Does Rousseau agree with the view that a doctrine of this nature can be based on sentiment as distinguished from reason? In other words, is the sentiment basis of the doctrine not a consequence of the fact that the doctrine is exposed to insoluble objections?

Mr. Schrock: I wasn't thinking so much of identifying, or . . .

LS: Yes, but the questions are inseparable. I mean, before you say you have to correct Rousseau's views stated earlier because the Savoyard Vicar says this and this, you have to know whether Rousseau is identical with the Savoyard Vicar.

Mr. Schrock: I was thinking more of the *Reveries*, and of this [inaudible] other peak. You have—the Profession of Faith is the way of bringing together the man and the citizen; but you have as the supplement to *Emile*—⁶ who [perhaps] would adopt the Profession of Faith—[a supplement] would be the solitary walker, or the visionary artist. But this visionary artist, the man of heart, is entirely different, I think, from Bacon and Descartes.

LS: No, there is no question. But the point is this—now how can I state it in the most simple way? In the *Reveries*, this later work, Rousseau reasserts—asserts even much more clearly than in the *Emile*—that he is substantially in agreement with the Savoyard Vicar; he says this first. Then you find a long discussion whether one is obliged to say the truth—a long discussion comes afterward.^{xi} And the solution is one must say the truth in every useful matter—in every *useful* matter. So, in other words, if you say the truth about how many pebbles there are in a stream, if you deceive about that, that's not lying. Good. So, it must be useful. But this means, of course, what Rousseau does not say here, but it is implied: what about dangerous truth? Clearly, if the duty of veracity applies *only* to useful truth, then there is a moral obligation to conceal dangerous truth. And then the argument goes on, and there are certain points where the contradiction between the Savoyard Vicar's doctrine and what Rousseau says become quite manifest—we will come to these passages; we have now to return to the context. Mr. Boyan and then Mr. Morrison.

Mr. Boyan: I am sorry, but when you went on to this discussion of the conflict, the issue between Rousseau and the liberal democrats, I didn't grasp it, this business of eating the cake and having it, too, and so forth.

LS: Well, the question is this: today, I mean if you take the extreme liberal line, they say democracy is compatible with unqualified freedom of expression, and even demands it. You know, they go very far in this respect, even when obscene literature . . . it becomes a very doubtful thing whether you can do anything against it. Very well. But then you must say, still . . . of course, they admit the right of Communist or Fascist propaganda as a matter of course, as you know. And then some people who have become alerted about the difficulties, people who were very liberal originally, like Sidney Hook, said heresy, yes; conspiracy, no.^{xii} Now, this is a nice formula, useful for many purposes, but of course not sufficient, because the line cannot so easily be drawn: because heresy may very well be long-range conspiracy. And then the problem comes down, what is the difference between long-range and short-range conspiracy; where will you draw the line there, because the long-range in critical times may become very short-range overnight. So, these are very difficult things. But more generally stated, the American society stands and falls by the agreement of the large majority as to the preferability of liberal democracy to any other regime. If, say, 50 percent of the American people were not convinced of that, this regime would be very weak and . . . look at France. So that is clear. So, without such an agreement—not of every individual, but of the *maior pars*, *maior sive melia pars*, of the larger or perhaps the better part of society—no regime can last. Now, this requires some actions of defense, whatever the ADA^{xiii} may say about it; difficulties arise sooner

^{xi} The identification with the Vicar is in the Third Walk (Rousseau, 2000, 23), and truth and lying are the subjects of the Fourth Walk.

^{xii} The title of Hook's 1952 book, published by the American Committee for Cultural Freedom.

^{xiii} Americans for Democratic Action.

or later which make it necessary. Now, Rousseau has thought that through. He said, yes, this is not something which must be grudgingly admitted—you know, and acted upon in an extreme situation—this must be openly admitted, that a regime must defend itself. And that requires certain education, I mean for example, pledging loyalty to the flag in school, and all this kind of thing; that is of course part of that education. I don't know whether people who study political socialization go into this kind of question, but that would really be the question of political socialization: children are brought up to become convinced of the preferability of liberal democracy. Now, but if this is so, if every regime rests on dedication to definite principles and these principles must be defended, this implies at least potentially a limitation of freedom of speech—I mean, whether you do it *only* when civil war is around the corner, or whether you do it in time, that is a matter of political prudence or imprudence, that is clear.

Now, I make another point: no regime which ever existed among men is truly simply perfect; and therefore it is necessary that there should be some men in that society who would be aware of these defects, and would in a judicious way—in a *judicious* way—wait for opportunities of safe change for the better. But all individual actions are based on some coherent thought—that is what is meant by *political* philosophy—and therefore, in other words, there is a need for men like Rousseau. But on the other hand, since his statement about the best regime, let me say, is necessarily at one point or the other at variance with the established order, he is in a way a dangerous man. Now, the present-day view is that these men, the conscience of the free society, the salt of the earth, or however they may call themselves, they are not regarded as dangerous men, but as You know,⁷ think only of Bertrand Russell. In other words, there is a certain blindness to the very gravity of the political questions implied. Now, Mr. Morrison, I hope Will you continue that?

Mr. Morrison: Yes, it's on the same topic [inaudible]. I was thinking of the other party, as you might say—I forget the exact term: it is something like party of self-criticism [inaudible] in the Soviet Union—but they have tried to institutionalize this, because they can't allow it to go [unmanaged]. They have tried to institutionalize it, and this produces some very interesting things. The problem shows itself up there by the fact that they tie themselves up in knots in trying to

LS: Yes, there it is obvious, because there they frankly deny any freedom of speech; they do not even⁸ [admit] that minimum of freedom of speech without which free society is impossible—namely, criticism, public criticism, say in the press or in other things, of the present government personnel, of a gross miscarriage of justice, and all this kind of thing. You know, this is, after all, a kind of freedom which is not only innocent, but also indispensable. I mean, they go to the other extreme—you know this fantastic thing, that it is absolutely impossible, even in the universities there, to discuss seriously the principles of Marxism. You cannot even read Trotsky there, who after all was, as I understand, a Marxist.

Student: The interesting thing is that I understand that his name does not appear in the history books in the schools.

LS: Yes, sure. I mean, this is such an outrageous thing, and beautifully illustrated by the fact that their chief newspaper is called *Pravda*, which I hear means truth. One can't take that seriously

for one moment, except because they are heavily armed. I mean, one can take them seriously as one must take gangsters very seriously.

Mr. Morrison: But the particularly interesting point is that they do have a thing now—there is one of these technical terms for it—which is self-criticism; and they pay terrific attention to it because they realize the need for this.

LS: Yes, but what does this mean? That in a given factory, some intelligent plumber can say in an assembly of plumbers, assembly of engineers, “Mr. Engineer, you come from a university, and you are not very practical; you can do the same thing by just this little switch”—that is self-criticism. Or it may also apply to some minor economic measures which are not too [important], but if someone would seriously suggest that the whole policy regarding agriculture is fundamentally wrong, I believe this would not be any longer regarded as legitimate self-criticism. However this may be, self-criticism means of course only criticism of particular measures; it does not mean criticism of fundamental, dangerous defects of the regime.^{xiv} First, Mr. Butterworth.

Mr. Butterworth: It’s still basically the same question, from another point of view. When you made your schema on the blackboard, and you spoke of Rousseau insofar as he is the solitary walker, and this question about him being useless—I think that it is interesting to note that in this one passage in the *Reveries* when he⁹ [mentioned] this, he said that it was the others who kept him being useless, [rather] kept him from being useful^{xv}

LS: No, no; he says, the final statement is that he was always a useless citizen. Oh, I see; I remember now what you say: Rousseau, as quite a few men before him, presented his defect from the political point of view as compulsory. In other words, he wanted to be just a nice watchmaker, or something, a citizen engineer, and then only he sees bad men prevented him from it. But this

Mr. Butterworth: No, this isn’t what I meant.¹⁰ Maybe my understanding is defective, but the way I understood it is that insofar as he is useless, it is in that he’s a philosopher or critic of society. But it seems that he’s saying that it’s only because les philosophes, that coterie, kept him

^{xiv} While the Communists at least *spoke* more seriously of self-criticism than this, this passage from Stalin’s speech of June 26, 1928 on self-criticism well-captures what Strauss has in mind: “But there is another kind of “self-criticism,” one that tends to *destroy* the Party spirit, to *discredit* the Soviet regime, to *weaken* our work of construction, to *corrupt* our economic cadres, to *disarm* the working class, and to foster talk of *degeneration*. It was just this kind of “self-criticism” that the Trotsky opposition was urging upon us only recently. It goes without saying that the Party has nothing in common with such “self-criticism.” It goes without saying that the Party will combat such “self-criticism” with might and main. A strict distinction must be drawn between this “self-criticism,” which is *alien* to us, destructive and anti-Bolshevik, and *our*, Bolshevik self-criticism, the object of which is to *promote* the Party spirit, to *consolidate* the Soviet regime, to *improve* our constructive work, to *strengthen* our economic cadres, to *arm* the working class.”

^{xv} Rousseau, 2000, Sixth Walk, p. 53.

from being useful that he was useless. In other words, if he had not been criticized he would have been useful; and I wonder what that means.

LS: I cannot . . . I simply do not know the *Reveries*.

Mr. Butterworth: It's Number 6.

LS: No, I can only say—assert, and you don't have to believe me—that I think that he really . . . The solitary dreamer is not merely accidentally a bad citizen, or an unsatisfactory citizen, but essentially; because the center of his being is his private life, sentiment of existence [inaudible]. But this eccentricity enables him, accidentally, but as a necessary accident—to become the conscience of a society, to be *the* teacher of legislators.

Student: But if he were able to effect his teachings, wouldn't he then be in a superlative sense a most useful citizen?

LS: Yes, but not merely citizen, because this applies to all states, you see; it transcends the individual *polis*, too. We must go back; two more, then we are finished.

Student: I would just like to go back . . . In other words, if I understood you correctly, this problem that you mentioned is a kind of dilemma of democracy; and what you're saying is that modern liberal theory doesn't recognize it as a dilemma, whereas Rousseau does.

LS: Yes, you can put it this way, but it is not only liberal democracy. But there it is particularly blurred, because the older regimes generally were restrictive, and there existed some equivalent of that; but in liberal democracy, especially according to the liberal interpretation, [it's] no holds barred: every speech, except crying "Fire!" in a crowded theater, is permitted. You know, I exaggerate it a bit.

Student: What is Rousseau's position on free speech limitation by government?

LS: Read the chapter on "Civil Religion." I mean, there must be an established religion; an established religion, and everyone who doesn't subscribe cannot become a citizen; and if he subscribes to it and acts against that creed, [it is] a capital crime. By the way, that had some practical consequences. In the French Revolution they had a kind of worship of Reason, with a capital R, which was one way of putting into practice Rousseau's civil religion.

So now, let us return then to the argument. We have discussed last time the natural theology of the Savoyard Vicar. I remind you of the key point. Two principles: God and matter, let us call them; and this means, of course, that every being—in particular, man—is the product of both God and matter. Man cannot be by nature simply good, because that non-good principle, matter, enters into his constitution. On the other hand, there is no need for explaining evil any further, because there is an evil principle, matter, there—and especially there is no basis for asserting original sin, this is the point.

Now, the Savoyard Vicar goes on then as follows [LS writes on the blackboard]: first, he has God and matter; and then we go down to the good will in man—let us call it goodness—and this is badness; and that means in practice altruism versus egoism. And this has to do with the fact that there are two substances in man, soul and body. So, there is a consistent dualism, going up from man's actions—soul and body—to God and matter. This is clear. Now, the difficulty is very simply this: prior to the introduction of theology, Rousseau had shown that goodness, or virtue, is a modification of self-love, or *amour-propre*; that is to say, he doesn't need an independent principle; he doesn't need two principles. Therefore, this, I think, is—for me, at any rate—sufficient proof of the fact that Rousseau did not himself accept this doctrine. But let us proceed. On page 243, paragraph 2.

Mr. Reinken: I am only aware of will through the consciousness of my own will, and intelligence is no better known to me. When you ask me what is the cause which determines my will, it is my turn to ask what cause determines my judgment; for it is plain that these two causes are but one; and if you understand clearly that man is active in his judgments, that his intelligence is only the power to compare and judge, you will see that his freedom is only a similar power or one derived from this; he chooses between good and evil as he judges between truth and falsehood; if his judgment is at fault, he chooses amiss. What then is the cause that determines his will? It is his judgment. And what is the cause that determines his judgment? It is his intelligence, his power of judging; the determining cause is in himself. Beyond that, I understand nothing.^{xvi}

LS: Yes—but what is the point? Now, what he has said before can be stated as follows: [there are] soul and body, the two substances. And the passions belong to the side of the body—and the passions means, of course, also self-preservation—mere desiring belongs to the body. Willing belongs to the soul, because willing is rational desire, i.e. virtuous desire. The implication: can there be a bad will? If will is by definition rational desire, as everyone admits it, but at the same time also virtuous desire, there cannot be a bad will. There can be desires coming up against the will; but there cannot be a bad will. This is, I think, the passage of which he speaks here, you know: “Beyond that, I understand nothing,” namely, I understand not what a bad will could mean. Good will, one would expect, however, has to do with *right* judgment; and bad will with false judgment. Let us turn to page 250, paragraph 2, beginning.

Mr. Reinken: “The morality of our actions—”

LS: “All morality of our actions.”

Mr. Reinken: “consists entirely in the judgments we ourselves form with regard to them.”^{xvii}

LS: Let us stop here. So, clearly, there can be false judgment as well as right judgment; that would simply be the answer. But what is the cause of judgment, and especially false judgment? Now, among other things, the conditions of the body. Rousseau has written on this subject in a work which he has then not finished, and which is apparently lost, *The Materialism of the Sage*:

^{xvi} E, 586; 442.

^{xvii} E, 595; 449.

how various things like illness, climate, and so on, affect our judgment.^{xviii} The difficulty is evaded in the sequel, as you can see on page 243, paragraph 4: “The principle of every action.”

Mr. Reinken: “The motive power of all action is in the will of a free creature; we can go no farther. It is not the word freedom that is meaningless, but the word necessity. To suppose some action which is not the effect of an active motive power is indeed to suppose effects without cause, to reason in a vicious circle. Either there is no original impulse, or every original impulse has no antecedent cause, and there is no will properly so-called without freedom. Man is therefore free to act, and as such he is animated by an immaterial substance; that is the third article of my creed. From these three you will easily deduce the rest, so that I need not enumerate them.”^{xxix}

LS: In other words, the way out which he finds is that man is free, so that there is ultimately no explanation possible of why a man in a given situation chooses his freedom badly or well. Man is free and hence animated by an immaterial substance. That means the origin of evil is in man, God only permitting it, as he states at the bottom of page 243. Why does God permit it? Read perhaps the sentence there on the bottom of page 243.

Mr. Reinken: “Providence has made him free that he may choose the good and refuse the evil. It has made him capable of this choice if he uses rightly the faculties bestowed upon him, but it has so strictly limited his powers that the misuse of his freedom cannot disturb the general order. The evil that man does reacts upon himself without affecting the system of the world—”

LS: Now, a bit before that: “Providence does not wish the evil that man does when he abuses the liberty which Providence gives him; but Providence does not prevent him from doing that evil, either because on the part of such a weak being this evil is null in his eyes, or because he can’t prevent it without limiting the liberty of that being,”^{xxx} and so on. Now, the first point I would state as follows: God permits evil perhaps because evil is so trivial in his eyes. Now he goes on to speak of the origin of moral evil: it is in man. On page 244, paragraph 2.

Mr. Reinken: “It is the abuse of our powers that makes us unhappy and wicked. Our cares, our sorrows, our sufferings are of our own making. Moral ills are undoubtedly the work of man, and physical ills would be nothing but for our vices which have made us liable to them.”^{xxxi}

LS: Let us stop here. Moral evil is in a way the origin of physical evil because without our vices, physical evil would not be sensible to us. Man in his primitive simplicity suffered barely any evils; so if we are so sensitive to evils, that’s our fault. Well, of course man in his primitive condition was not sensible to evil because he was a stupid animal, we know; and what did he care when he had generated children and they died, and the wife he had met somewhere in the forest died? He was simply stupid. Now, on page 244, bottom.

^{xviii} Rousseau discusses this work in the *Confessions* (Rousseau, 1995, 343-44).

^{xix} *E*, 586-87; 442.

^{xx} *E*, 587; 442.

^{xxi} *E*, 587; 443.

Mr. Reinken: “O Man! seek no further for the author of evil; thou art he. There is no evil but the evil you do or the evil you suffer, and both come from yourself. Evil in general can only spring from disorder, and in the order of the world I find a never-failing system. Evil in particular cases exists only in the mind of those who experience it—”

LS: “in the sentiment of the being which suffers.”

Mr. Reinken: “only in the sentiment of those who suffer it; and this sentiment is not the gift of nature, but the work of man himself. Pain has little power over those who, having thought little, look neither before nor after. Take away our fatal progress, take away our faults and our vices, take away man's handiwork, and all is well.”^{xxii}

LS: So, in other words, [the] return to primitive simplicity is the solution to the problem of evil. Now, that this is not in any way adequate from the point of view here stated is clear, because it is simply contradictory, what he says; because he had suggested—admittedly only suggested, not asserted—that there are *two* principles, God *and* matter; and therefore the author of evil, simply, cannot be merely man. He has forgotten that here. So, in other words, when he comes to the moral problem he, as it were, forgets this fundamental dualism; and he continues that in the sequel, when you turn to page 245 in the second paragraph.

Mr. Reinken: “Where all is well, there is no such thing as injustice. Justice and goodness are inseparable; now goodness is the necessary result or boundless power and of that self-love which is innate in all sentient beings.”^{xxiii}

END OF TAPE SIDE ONE

LS: —power, which would seem to be distinguished, somehow, with difficulty, from omnipotence. But he does not use here the term omnipotence yet; because he cannot speak of omnipotence because of the dualism of principles, God and matter. Omnipotence alone, we can say, would lead to unqualified goodness of creation, and therefore original man. But if there are two principles, there cannot be unqualified goodness of the world, and of man in his original state. Differently stated, a non-omnipotent being cannot be simply good, but it can at most pursue its good only with the least harm to others. In the next paragraph . . . Well, we cannot read it. God *owes* happiness to the just—you see now, we turn around: since God is now declared to be omnipotent, and therefore perfectly good and capable of being perfectly just, he owes happiness to the just. This is really . . . You see, if there is another power called matter, then the unhappiness of the just may very well be due to the limited power of God, who wishes to be just but cannot do it because of the resistance of matter. But if God is omnipotent, he can be just and his . . . The conflict between Providence and the power of evil must be faced. God owes happiness to the just; but look at the prosperity of the wicked. The solution: immortality, just dispensation after death. Immortality is theoretically possible, because of the duality of the

^{xxii} *E*, 588; 443-44.

^{xxiii} *E*, 588; 444.

substances, and morally necessary. And this is pursued in the sequel; if you turn to page 246, paragraph 2: “But what is that life after death?”^{xxiv}

Mr. Reinken: “Is the soul of man in its nature immortal?”

LS: You see, this was a question long discussed in former times: is immortality natural to the soul, or is the soul immortal only by virtue of divine promise? And so this is the question to which he refers.

Mr. Reinken: “I know not. My finite understanding cannot hold the infinite; what is called eternity eludes my grasp.”

LS: “What is called infinite escapes me.” Really, why she makes these absolutely frivolous changes is [inexplicable]; it seems to be the most common vice among translators that they just want to vary expressions to show their own creativeness, I believe they call it. You see how bad creativity can be. Now, go on.

Mr. Reinken: “What can I assert or deny, how can I reason with regard to what I cannot conceive? I believe that the soul survives the body for the maintenance of order—”

LS: “sufficiently for the maintenance of order.”

Student: But what does that mean; “sufficiently for the maintenance of *civil* order”?

LS: No, go on; let us first read it.

Mr. Reinken: “who knows if this is enough to make it eternal?”

LS: “Whether it is sufficient for enduring always.” Yes.

Mr. Reinken: “However, I know that the body is worn out and destroyed by the division of its parts, but I cannot conceive a similar destruction of the conscious nature—”

LS: Because of its simplicity, and therefore indissolubility. Yes.

Mr. Reinken: “and as I cannot imagine how it can die, I presume that it does not die. As this assumption is consoling and in itself not unreasonable, why should I fear to accept it?”^{xxv}

LS: “to surrender to it.” So now, there is no certainty regarding immortality; that is only a comforting and plausible assumption. In the preceding paragraph—we cannot read all of this—he has indicated the unity of body and soul is unnatural: “Since they are of so different natures,” he says, “they were, through the union, in a violent state,” i.e. in an unnatural state; “and when

^{xxiv} Strauss adds “after death,” since, without the previous paragraph, the meaning of “that life” is otherwise unclear.

^{xxv} E, 590; 445.

this union ceases, they render both into their natural state.”^{xxvi} So, the union of body and soul, what we call life, is unnatural. The consequence is a most extreme otherworldliness, Manichean type; and this is taught by Rousseau, of all people. Radical otherworldliness, we may say, has the same status as the return to the stupid animals. In other words, it is a kind of provisional suggestion of [inaudible]. Let me read to you something from the *Préface de Narcisse*, an early writing of Rousseau, after the *Second Discourse*. There we find the statement:

“A strange and disastrous combination, where¹¹ accumulated wealth, always facilitates the means to accumulate still more, greater wealth; and where it is impossible to him who owns nothing to acquire anything; where the good man has no means to leave his misery; where the greatest scoundrels are most honored; and where one must necessarily abandon virtue in order to become a decent man.” Meaning a respected man. “I know that the declaimers have said all these things a hundred times”—now, the declaimers are the preachers, the theologians; you know, the wickedness of the world—“but they said it declaimingly, and I say it on the basis of reason. They have observed evil, and I discovered the causes of evil; and I have seen especially one thing very comforting and very useful by showing that all these evils do not belong so much to man as to man badly governed.”^{xxvii}

In other words, Rousseau agrees with the theologians by saying, by admitting, that evil rules among men. But the theologians don’t understand it; they don’t know the reasons. He sees the reasons: the reason is bad government, bad order of society. Now you see clearly that if Rousseau agreed with the Vicar in this point, that life on earth is the source of all evil, the union of body and soul, and the only solution is after death, then he could not be the political thinker he claims to be. Is it clear? I mean, in other words, not salvation after death, but salvation on earth through political reform is Rousseau’s teaching, and not the teaching of the Vicar. Here you have the difference. The Vicar is not a political man. The Vicar is as much a declaimer as any orthodox theologian is, do you see that? That is, I think, crucial. Mr. Schrock.

Mr. Schrock: I didn’t understand the extent to which the Vicar claimed that man had free will. It seems to me that in two passages he contradicted himself. Just previously¹² he has claimed a limiting element of matter, or something; but previous to that he had claimed that man was possessed of free will.

LS: Well, what he does is this. First, the general rule: I mean, if one wants to understand the Vicar, one must concentrate on where he deviates from the generally accepted doctrines, number one. Now, the first massive deviation was the admission of the possibility of eternity of matter. And now we—on the basis of what Rousseau says elsewhere, and perhaps using our own head also a bit—we reach the conclusion that the eternity of matter would explain the evil without any recourse to the misuse of human freedom; because God is not omnipotent: he is bound by a recalcitrant thing called matter.

Mr. Schrock: God is bound, but man is not: man has a certain area of freedom, is that it?

LS: Yes, but that is a long question, I mean, how to disentangle that here. But let us see what the—how is he called?—what the Vicar does. Now, after having stated that, he becomes more

^{xxvi} E, 590; 445.

^{xxvii} Rousseau, 1992, 194.

orthodox while he goes; [inaudible] and he finally reaches a point where he asserts practically omnipotence, which is incompatible with the starting point. Now, on the basis of omnipotence, he must of course say man was created perfect, the providential order is absolutely just, and all evil stems from man, contrary to the implication of his premise. Now, again, this assertion, all evil stems from men, is acceptable to Rousseau, rightly understood; but the Vicar does not understand it rightly. [As] the Vicar understands it, all evil stems from man, and the order is just, providential order is just. Answer^{xxviii}: human life here is based on an unnatural combination of^{l3} [soul] and body—which of course is also incompatible with the goodness of God: why should he make such an unnatural combination? But he doesn't [have an answer]; well, perhaps he has an answer, but he surely doesn't even sketch an answer. But the main point is, the solution is life after death, which is *not* Rousseau's solution: because Rousseau says, the solution is—I quoted this passage from the *Narcisse*—political change. Political change will establish as much justice as possible—which is not perfect justice. So therefore, may I now repeat my statement which was perhaps unintelligible before: this radical otherworldliness which we find here has the same status as the return to the stupid animal, to the woods; and Rousseau never meant that seriously, that Rousseau should return to the woods. But what he meant was to return in our thinking to the principles of, to the origins of society, and through such return find the way towards the establishment of a rational society. Similarly he does not take seriously, I believe, this radical otherworldliness, but rather a political solution. Mr. Butterworth.

Mr. Butterworth: I have one question on this: if, however, Rousseau's solution, as you say, is that the justice that one can find in the political society is not a great deal—

LS: No; that, Rousseau would say, is a lot, if it is a well-ordered society. It is not perfect: I mean, there can always be . . . There is no exclusion of miscarriage of justice on the basis of error and even on the basis of dishonesty and so [on], but you can have a reasonably just society.

Student: But isn't there always the fundamental possibility that this society isn't tenable, even for Rousseau? Just thinking from a very coarse level, on the contract . . .

LS: But still, you must . . . I mean, this statement against the declaimers—that he agrees, the world is in evil shape. But he disagrees with them because he knows the true reasons: the world is in an evil shape because it is badly governed, meaning badly governed by men, and you must replace it by good government. [That] would seem to show where he is different from [the Vicar]. And in addition, the Savoyard Vicar—don't forget this very obvious fact—the Savoyard Vicar develops a theology, and a theology-based ethics, but he doesn't say a word about politics. After all, you know how important that is for Rousseau. There was a passage earlier—which we didn't read, because we cannot read everything—where he says: he who talks about morals without considering politics, and vice versa, doesn't understand anything. I forgot, it was in the fourth book, but I do not remember now the exact passage. Does anyone remember it? It was clearly there.^{xxix}

^{xxviii} That is, the answer to the problem of making evil and a just order compatible—Strauss does not make it to the answer, life after death, for another sentence.

^{xxix} *E*, 534; 389.

Student: But the thing is that if nonetheless the political society offered by Rousseau cannot be ultimately held up, then you have to come back to this original dichotomy that we saw between individual and society.

LS: I said this before.

Student: Yes, but I mean, the point is, in the ultimate analysis can you really say that Rousseau does not come to a point where you have to simply say that he, too, is otherworldly?

LS: Yes, but in *this* life; not otherworldly. You can say he is at a certain point apolitical, but not otherworldly, oh no. That is very important. Now, in the sequel, he speaks of the question of eternal damnation, and rejects it as incompatible with the justice of God, incompatible with the goodness of God. The Hell is on earth. Let us see on page 247, paragraph 2; what does he say?

Mr. Reinken: “Do not ask me whether the torments of the wicked will endure forever, whether the goodness of their creator can condemn them to the eternal suffering; again, I cannot tell, and I have no empty curiosity for the investigation of useless problems.”^{xxx}

LS: Turn to the next paragraph.

Mr. Reinken: “When our fleeting needs are over, and our mad desires are at rest, there should also be an end to our passions and our crimes. Can pure spirits be capable of any perversity? Having need of nothing, why should they be wicked?”^{xxxi}

LS: In other words, and since the wickedness ceases by necessity when the body is away, then there is no longer reason for punishing them. So he rejects, I think we can safely say,¹⁴ eternal punishment. On page 248, paragraph 1; now, this is a long paragraph: in the middle of the paragraph.

Mr. Reinken: “When I think that it is he that gives life and movement to the living and moving substance which controls all living bodies; when I hear it said that my soul is spiritual and that God is a spirit, I revolt against this abasement of the divine essence; as if God and my soul were of one and the same nature! As if God were not the one and only absolute being, the only really active, feeling, thinking, willing being, from whom we derive our thought, feeling, motion, will, our freedom and our very existence! We are free because he wills our freedom—”

LS: “We are free *only* because he wills that we are free.”

Mr. Reinken: “and his inexplicable substance is to our souls what our souls are to our bodies. I know not whether he has created matter, body, soul, the world itself. The idea of creation confounds me and eludes my grasp; so far as I can conceive of it I believe it; but I know that he has formed the universe and all that is, that he has made and ordered all things. No doubt God is eternal; but can my mind grasp the idea of eternity?”^{xxxii}

^{xxx} E, 591; 446.

^{xxxi} E, 592; 446-47.

^{xxxii} E, 592-93; 447.

LS: In other words—in plain English—when I say God is eternal I don't know what it means; that is what it amounts to. Rousseau uses here a kind of thing which was used before, especially by Hobbes: starting from the generally acknowledged view¹⁵ that the attributes applied to God cannot be literally the same as applied to men, to [then] say¹⁶ it makes no sense to call God spirit and to apply the other predicates to Him. He also again, in a slightly concealed form, denies creation: "I know that he has formed the universe; creation, that passes my understanding; I do not know."^{xxxiii} Now, page 249, in the third paragraph. Here, the consequences for morality are developed.

Mr. Reinken: "Having thus deduced from the perception of objects of sense and from my inner consciousness,^{xxxiv} which leads me to judge of causes by my native reason, the principal truths which I require to know, I must now seek such principles of conduct as I can draw from them, and such rules as I must lay down for my guidance in the fulfillment of my destiny in this world, according to the purpose of my Maker. Still following the same method, I do not derive these rules from the principles of the higher philosophy—"

LS: "of a higher philosophy." That is a derogatory term, of course. In other words, he is a simple man.

Mr. Reinken: "I find them in the depths of my heart, traced by nature in characters which nothing can efface. I need only consult myself with regard to what I wish to do; what I feel to be right is right, what I feel to be wrong is wrong; conscience is the best casuist; and it is only when we haggle with conscience that we have recourse to the subtleties of argument. Our first duty^{xxxv} is towards ourself; yet how often does the voice of others^{xxxvi} tell us that in seeking our good at the expense of others we are doing ill? We think we are following the guidance of nature, and we are resisting it; we listen to what she says to our senses, and we neglect what she says to our heart; the active being obeys, the passive commands. Conscience is the voice of the soul, passions are the voice of the body."^{xxxvii}

LS: Yes; in other words, the conscience never errs. The conscience never errs; and therefore we only listen to it, we listen to our heart; the heart becomes perfectly emancipated from any higher control. The clear and simple guide. But the difficulty is this, if you turn to page 250, paragraph 3.

Mr. Reinken: "My young friend, let us look within—"

LS: "let us turn, return within ourselves."

^{xxxiii} Strauss is paraphrasing.

^{xxxiv} Foxley's translation of "*sentiment*."

^{xxxv} Foxley's translation of "soins," perhaps better translated as "cares."

^{xxxvi} As a student and Strauss are about to note, this "the voice of others" is a surprising mistranslation of "voix intérieure," or "interior voice."

^{xxxvii} *E*, 594; 448-49.

Mr. Reinken: “let us set aside all personal prejudices and see whither our inclinations lead us. Do we take more pleasure in the sight of the sufferings of others or their joys? Is it pleasanter to do a kind action or an unkind action, and which leaves the more delightful memory behind it? Why do you enjoy the theatre? Do you delight in the crimes you behold? Do you weep over the punishment which overtakes the criminal?”^{xxxviii}

LS: Yes. Now, a bit later: “This enthusiasm of virtue, which relation does it have with our private interest? Why would I wish to be rather Cato.”

Mr. Reinken: “dying by his own hand, rather than Caesar in his triumphs?”^{xxxix}

LS: And so on. Nature . . . Yes, but the question of course to which one would have to go is, is conscience in this sense in which he uses it such a clear and simple guide? Now, what is his example? “How often does the inner voice tell us”—that, we read before—“that when we pursue our well-being at the expense of others we do evil?” You remember the maxim he had stated before, pursue your good with the least harm to others, which means clearly that we cannot help avoiding that. Incidentally, of course, I mean, on the basis of this argument merely, this¹⁷ [proves] nothing; [it] in no way conclusive, you know. The examples which he takes here, the first regarding our acting, the second when we observe others. . . . I mean, it is very easy to be virtuous in the theater, where you observe, and to sympathize with Macduff against Macbeth; but a man may do that and then in his little homely way be a Macbeth. So, in other words, the sweetness of revenge, of which he doesn’t speak here, can be as powerful, of course, as the sweetness of the good conscience. This needs much larger consideration; we have to raise the question, what precisely is the conscience. Page 252, paragraph 3.

Student: May I? On 249, it seems that the conscience’s first rule was, me first.

LS: Where is that, what you say?

Student: This previous passage reads that “characters engraved on the heart” but conscience is made to preach about selfishness, and it is these other voices coming to us through the senses which tell us—

LS: What passage is that? “First of all concerns is that of myself”?

Student: “Our first duty is towards ourself; yet how often does the voice of others tell us that in seeking our good at the expense of others we are doing ill?”

LS: Now, let me see whether we have the same passage: “The first of all concerns is that of oneself; and yet how often has the inner voice told us that if we pursue our good at the expense of others we act badly.” Is that it?

Student: She has translated it into an outrageous

^{xxxviii} E, 596; 450.

^{xxxix} E, 596; 450.

Student: You're right; you're perfectly right.

LS: No other reading?

Student: No.

LS: Have you looked it up?

Student: Yes.

LS: Well, she is really bad.

Student: Where is that?

Student: On page 249, the third paragraph, about 10 lines above the note. She says "the voice of others"; it should be "the inner voice."

LS: "the inner voice," yes. Now, let us see; as for the conscience, what is the conscience? Page 252, paragraph 2.

Mr. Reinken: "There is therefore at the bottom of our hearts an innate principle of justice and virtue, by which, in spite of our maxims, we judge our own actions or those of others to be good or evil; and it is this principle that I call conscience."^{xl}

LS: Yes, but it is of course always understood that conscience is not reason¹⁸. The next paragraph we cannot read, which is a quite impressive statement, and which one should consider whenever one is confronted with the vulgar relativism of the social sciences today, because it is just a reminder of some simple truth: that men do not disagree so much—the societies—as present-day anthropologists claim they do. Let us turn to page 253, paragraph 3.

Mr. Reinken: "For this purpose it is enough to lead you to distinguish between our acquired ideas and our natural feelings; for feeling precedes knowledge; and since we do not learn to seek what is good for us and avoid what is bad for us, but get this desire from nature, in the same way the love of good and the hatred of evil are as natural to us as our self-love. The decrees of conscience are not judgments but feelings. Although all our ideas come from without, the feelings by which they are weighed are within us, and it is by these feelings alone that we perceive fitness or unfitness of things in relation to ourselves, which leads us to seek or shun these things."^{xli}

LS: Here, he seems to solve the difficulty which he had raised on page 243, second paragraph^{xlii}: the cause of the good will is not true judgment, but the conscience; and conscience—implied—cannot err. And let us read the following paragraph.

^{xl} E, 598; 451-52.

^{xli} E, 599; 453.

^{xlii} E, 586; 442.

Mr. Reinken: “To exist^{xliii} is to feel; our feeling is undoubtedly earlier than our intelligence, and we had feelings before we had ideas. Whatever may be the cause of our being, it has provided for our preservation by giving us feelings suited to our nature; and no one can deny that these at least are innate.”

LS: That was of course the basis of the whole argument before: concern with self-preservation.

Mr. Reinken: “These feelings, so far as the individual is concerned, are self-love, fear, pain—”

LS: “fear of pain.”

Mr. Reinken: “fear of pain, the dread of death, the desire for comfort.”

LS: In other words, these are things which not even Hobbes denied; number one. Now we come to a more interesting point.

Mr. Reinken: “Again, if, as it is impossible to doubt, man is by nature sociable, or at least fitted to become sociable, he can only be so by means of other innate feelings, relative to his kind; for if only physical well-being were considered, men would certainly be scattered rather than brought together. But the motive power of conscience is derived from the moral system formed through this twofold relation to himself and to his fellow-men. To know good is not to love it; this knowledge is not innate in man; but as soon as his reason leads him to perceive it, his conscience impels him to love it; it is this feeling which is innate.”^{xliv}

LS: Now, here Rousseau says—or the Vicar says—man has innate sentiments relative to others, to his species. Hitherto we have known only one such sentiment—pity, you remember—and this became a very complicated question. Here he *almost* says man is by nature social; but he says, in the first place, not social, but *sociable*: sociable is a being which can become social. And second, he doesn’t even say that: he says able to become sociable. Again, something which not even Hobbes denied; because man can become sociable, obviously: otherwise he could never become a member of society. But this makes also clearer that here the Vicar agrees with Rousseau. Now, the key point, however, is here that What then is this innate feeling? How does it jibe with what Rousseau said before? I think it only jibes with it if we assume that this feeling is compassion. But, as the Vicar doesn’t say, but Rousseau has said, compassion is, as all passions, a modification of the one principle of self-preservation, and even of its derivative, *amour-propre*. So that the difference between Rousseau and the Vicar is that Rousseau says the virtuous principle is a modification of the morally neutral, whereas the Vicar says it has a radically different origin.

In the sequel, on page 254, in the second paragraph, this reminds of the end of the *First Discourse*: here, this call on conscience; but there in the *First Discourse*, he addressed not conscience, but virtue; and one must, should compare it. Clearly there is no erring conscience, according to this doctrine. This is then the meaning; that is the peak, the end, the meaning of the Profession of Faith: there is a natural morality of utmost simplicity and unambiguity, the

^{xliii} Foxley does not translate “*pour nous*,” “for us.”

^{xliv} *E*, 600; 453.

morality of the conscience. Now, if this is natural, and is as such available in every man, there is no difficulty in democracy. Every human being, as human being, is competent to judge morality; whereas from the point of view of the older view, there was a difference between the men who are truly prudent, and those who are not truly prudent, according . . . all men are equally wise in the decisive respect. No one needs an authority by nature; and only accidentally he might need it. Let us turn to page 255, paragraph 2.

Mr. Reinken: “Ever at strife between my natural feelings, which spoke of the common weal, and my reason, which spoke of self—”

LS: You see here now, the conflict between conscience and reason: conscience is directed toward the common good; reason, calculating reason, is directed toward my own good. So, if therefore there is such a thing as the conscience as here described, then there is no fundamental difficulty regarding society.

Student: But he’s just said that conscience attaches itself to ideas found out by the reason.

LS: Yes, but it is primary. It acquires a certain development through experience, but it is innate. Its primary tendency is toward the common good; that is the point. Now, read on.

Mr. Reinken: “I should have drifted through life in perpetual uncertainty, hating^{xlv} evil, loving good, and always at war with myself, if my heart had not received further light, if that truth which determined my opinions had not also settled my conduct, and set me at peace with myself. Reason alone is not a sufficient foundation for virtue; what solid ground can be found?”

LS: Again here, a point where Rousseau agrees, against Hobbes and Locke: reason alone is not a sufficient basis; there must be something like sentiment. But the question is, which sentiment; and what is its status? Go on.

Mr. Reinken: “Virtue we are told is love of order.”

LS: Yes, now this was a view, an old view, of course, but restated powerfully by Malebranche, a French thinker of the seventeenth century, a Christian thinker. Yes.

Mr. Reinken: “But can this love prevail over my love for my own well-being, and ought it so to prevail? Let them give me clear and sufficient reason for this preference. Their so-called principle is in truth a mere playing with words; for I also say that vice is love of order, differently understood. Wherever there is feeling and intelligence, there is some sort of moral order. The difference is this: the good man orders his life with regard to all men—”

LS: “to the whole”: that is a more literal translation, leaving it open whether this is the political society or the universe, and meaning then God.

Mr. Reinken: “the wicked orders it for self alone. The latter centers all things round himself; the other measures his radius and remains on the circumference. Thus his place depends on the

^{xlv} A mistranslation of “*faisant*,” doing.

common center, which is God, and on all the concentric circles which are His creatures. If there is no God, the wicked is right and the good man is nothing but a fool.”^{xlvi}

LS: So, morality is possible *only* on a theological basis. Only on a theological basis, because only on that [basis] can there be a natural tendency towards the common good; whereas on the non-theological basis, the concern with the common good can only be derivative from reason, i.e. from concern with one’s own good; concern with the common good can only be based either on calculation or on deception. That is of course also [inaudible]. Let us turn to page 256, paragraph 2.

Mr. Reinken: “Why is my soul subjected to my senses, and imprisoned in this body by which it is enslaved and thwarted? I know not; have I entered into the counsels of the Almighty?”

LS: “of God.”

Mr. Reinken: “But I may, without rashness, venture on a modest conjecture. I say to myself: if man’s soul had remained in a state of freedom and innocence—”

LS: I don’t like that, because it creates certain connotations which are more Christian than the text is: “If the spirit of man had remained free and pure.” You know, when you say innocence, you think immediately of the state of innocence.

Mr. Reinken: “free and pure, what merit would there have been in loving and obeying the order he found established, an order which it would not have been to his advantage to disturb? He would be happy, no doubt, but his happiness would not attain to the highest point, the pride of virtue—”

LS: “the glory of virtue.”

Mr. Reinken: “and the witness of a good conscience within him; he would be but as the angels are, and no doubt the good man will be more than they.”

LS: In other words, he implies that angels cannot sin.

Mr. Reinken: “Bound to a mortal body, by bonds as strange as they are powerful—”

LS: “as incomprehensible as they are powerful.”

Mr. Reinken: “his care for the preservation of this body tempts the soul to think only of self, and gives it an interest opposed to the general order of things, which it is still capable of knowing and loving; then it is that the right use of his freedom becomes at once the merit and the reward; then it is that it prepares for itself unending happiness, by resisting its earthly passions and following its original direction.”^{xlvi}

^{xlvi} E, 602; 455.

^{xlvi} E, 603; 456.

LS: Yes; so, self-preservation, we see here, is incompatible with love of the general order. But the most sublime happiness, the love of the general order, consists in the glory of virtue, and the good testimony about oneself, i.e., according to Rousseau's psychology, in a modification of *amour-propre*. I can only repeat, the principles of the Vicar would lead to an entirely different education, of course, than that given to Emile, if this were true . . . I mean, if the Vicar were right. The Vicar would not educate Emile in the way in which Rousseau educates him if these natural sentiments exist, you know; and Emile has been educated on the principle there is no such natural sentiment, natural love of order. Mr. Morrison.

Mr. Morrison: Does Sophie not get an education very much along that line?

LS: That's undeniable; but may I ask you what difference between Emile and Sophie is the most obvious difference?

Mr. Morrison: Well, in their sex.

LS: She belongs to the weaker sex, that's it. Women—I am sorry, Miss Huckins; it is not I who speak, but other people. That is the point of view, you know, when . . . There is a very simple passage in Xenophon which illustrates it very well: he says, Socrates says in a speech, if someone dies, and has to leave his children to a friend to take care of them, what kind of friend would he seek—that is the question. And he specifies that: if he leaves sons, to educate; and daughters to watch.^{xlvi} This is the view of the distinction ascribed by Xenophon to Socrates, for which I disclaim all responsibility. So, in the sequel, there is a brief remark, on page 257, in the third paragraph. "I converse with him" Do you have that? In the second or third sentence.

Mr. Reinken: "I converse with him; I immerse all my powers in his divine essence; I am overwhelmed by his kindness, I bless him and his gifts, but I do not pray to him. What should I ask of him—"^{xli}

LS: He doesn't pray to him; that is very characteristic; he doesn't pray. This is very characteristic of other things in the eighteenth century. Kant, for example, fundamentally a religious philosopher, regards, rejects prayer as—how does he call it?—lip service. Lip service, you know: *Do* the right thing; fulfill God's demands. You know, prayer—.

Student: I was curious when you said that the Vicar's principles would lead to an entirely different education of Emile. How does Rousseau expect Emile to believe this religion if in fact he was educated according to Rousseau's principles?

LS: Because now . . . that we explained. Children . . . I mean, there is a formal explanation; we have discussed that. Children understand only bodily and sensible things. But then he gradually grows up; he studies mathematics, for example, and these are not simply sensible things—mathematical objects: circles, numbers, and so on—but they are related essentially to sensible things. And then he gradually learns also of certain concepts which can no longer have a direct

^{xlvi} Xenophon, *Memorabilia*, 1.5.2.

^{xli} *E*, 605;457.

sensible representation, and then, once he has reached that stage, he can understand such things as spirit.

Student: What I mean is this: won't Emile see that if this religion were true, his education should have been different?

LS: No; under no circumstances must he see that; because that would mean destroying . . .

Student: The religion.

LS: No, the trust in his teacher. No, that is impossible. But he must really take it to mean that No. There is a statement; did we not read a statement where he says that up to a certain point he educated him with guile and force, and from now on he can talk

Student: That's later on.

LS: Later on; all right. We will take that up. Let us first consider the last statement we have to see, on page 257, bottom.

Mr. Reinken: "In my well-founded self-distrust the only thing that I ask of God, or rather expect from his justice, is to correct my error if I go astray, if that error is dangerous to me. To be honest I need not think myself infallible; my opinions, which seem to me true, may be so many lies; for what man is there who does not cling to his own beliefs; and how many men are agreed in everything? The illusion which deceives me may indeed have its source in myself, but it is God alone who can remove it. I have done all I can to attain to truth; but its source is beyond my reach; is it my fault if my strength fails me and I can go no further; it is for Truth to draw near to me."¹

LS: Yes; in other words, he admits that his firmest opinions may be lies. So, this is only another way of saying what Rousseau says: they are exposed to insoluble objections, as Rousseau has said before.

It would be impossible to take up today the assignment of Mr. Nicgorski; we will do it next time, and we can easily do it because next time's assignment, which will have a paper by Mr. Hartman and Mr. Boyan, is relatively short, and so we will have time for that.

I have not here that reference—that is very bad—where the conflict comes out very clearly; I mean the conflict between Rousseau and the Savoyard Vicar. I should have made a note here, which I didn't do.

Student: Do you mean in the *Reveries* or the *Letter to Beaumont*?

LS: No, in the *Reveries*. Now, let me see; if you can be a bit patient with me I might be able to find it. At any rate, there is a statement where the editor—who is a very sensible editor, Marcel Raymond—of the *Revue de science politique* admits when Rousseau That there is a glaring

¹ *E*, 605-606; 45.

contradiction between the teaching of Providence presented in the very *Reveries*, in an earlier chapter, and what he says later about the blind necessity, the blind necessity which rules the fate of man. Unfortunately, I cannot find this remark. Yes, here it is: “At the end of the second Promenade, on the contrary, Rousseau regarded his sufferings and the proscriptions of which he was the object as a providential fact; and here” I can perhaps find where that is; that is note 67 to which it belongs, but where is that?^{li} I am sorry; that is at any rate in a later That is somewhere in the Seventh Promenade, these statements occur.^{lii} So, there is no question that But please don’t misunderstand me: these things require a much closer study than we can possibly give here in a single seminar. I would be satisfied if every one of you would regard it as *possible*—not more—that Rousseau’s opinion may not be identical with the opinion of the Savoyard Vicar. You see, afterwards, partly here and partly in the reply to the Archbishop of Paris and partly in the *Letters from the Mountain*, Rousseau identifies himself with the Profession of the Savoyard Vicar, but this was an entirely different situation. The Profession of the Savoyard Vicar was regarded by public opinion as unbearable, you know; so the least he could do was to return to that relatively bearable position—in spite of its unbearability—compared with the other position, so to speak to the left, in political terms, of the Savoyard Vicar. Did I make myself clear? No? Well, left, I meant more remote from [inaudible]. [LS writes on the Blackboard] Here is the Savoyard Vicar; and here is Jean-Jacques. Now this, Rousseau regarded as publicly defensible—otherwise he wouldn’t have written it. Now, if it proved to create a European scandal, the least he could do is to identify himself with that, and not to say, well, this is only a weak inkling of what I truly think. I mean, it is really hard for anyone I have done some work in former times on the eighteenth century, but even I have always difficulties in understanding the very severe restrictions which existed. You must not forget [that] a book which is today admired—and not without reason—as a document of sobriety and conservatism and moderation, like Montesquieu’s *Spirit of the Laws*, could not be published—and he was a very high official, you know, in Bordeaux, and a very respected man. He couldn’t publish this with his name on the title page, or in France: it was published anonymously in Geneva. And the other people—I mean these famous atheists and materialists—they of course—I mean d’Holbach and La Mettrie—they published their things, of course, anonymously and in Holland. The Dutch had in that time a very bad reputation among pious Christians—in your country for a special reason, because they seem to have taken over in 1688, you remember that—and where they said all kinds of nasty things about the Dutch, where the spirit of trade seemed to be more powerful than any pious considerations, which of course was unjust to the Dutch, but had a certain plausibility, undeniable. And the great potentate who was very liberal was Frederick the Great. He was a friend of Voltaire, and he liked d’Alembert and also other people; and he was very free. And the states of Frederick the Great were the only place where Rousseau could find a refuge—in Neuchâtel, in Switzerland, which at that time belonged to the Prussian crown—apart from England, of course, where he could go. In England there was a relatively—relatively—great freedom of publication, but in the continental countries it didn’t exist, except in Prussia under Frederick the Great. And one sees it . . . I mean, there were people who were regarded as the most notorious men, and these were Hobbes and Spinoza; and it is quite interesting to see how I mean, they are not frequently mentioned except by adverse ways. Hobbes was a bit better off than Spinoza, but Spinoza was referred to At the most

^{li} Jean-Jacques Rousseau, *Les Rêveries du Promeneur Solitaire*, ed. Marcel Raymond (Genève: Librairie Droz, 1967), p. 211.

^{lii} In the Eighth Walk. See Rousseau, 2000, 72-73.

people said approvingly that he led apparently an innocent life, in spite of his terrible convictions. And in Germany, the first statement in favor of Spinoza, or his philosophy, was published in 1785—that's very much, twenty-three years later.

And so, one must always take this into consideration as the background, because in each particular case a particular investigation is necessary. Now, in the case of Rousseau, we have¹⁹ some almost [quite] direct evidence, his explicit discussion of the question of sincerity in writings. Not only in the [*Reveries*]; the *Reveries* is the most coherent^{liii}; but there are other statements also in other places. And I don't see any other way in which one can account for the difficulties.

Student: There is one thing. I see your rule of interpretation as being very sound for the things that are very definitely [a] defense²⁰ [like the letter] Rousseau wrote to Beaumont and the *Letter to d'Alembert*; but the *Reveries* I wonder about, because of the fact that he begins the whole thing by saying that this is his last work, and it's something which he doesn't really care whether they publish or not; and then the other one is

LS: But look; it *could* be published, could it not? I mean, after all

Student: But it was really too late at that time for him to . . . except for the fact that he wanted to live beyond his time.

LS: Yes, but it would discredit An open statement of his position would of course have discredited his whole work. I mean, that Rousseau, and even his most daring things, became acceptable to a large body of opinion through the victory of the French Revolution, he could not foresee. And in addition, on the basis of the French Revolution, how, to what extent was Rousseau truly understood? When you read the general literature on Rousseau, that is only a kind of The very crudest things—the doctrine on the *Social Contract*, and so on—they are of course known. But [as for] his attitude toward religion, I think it is only the most massive things that are clear, like his criticism of revealed religion. These, of course, were points which had been stated among these Englishmen—Collins^{liv} and so, the so-called English deists—I have never read them, so I don't know how far they went. But that was after Rousseau's death that this issue was discussed in Germany: that was in the . . . well, in the 1770's there was a very well-known man, a professor of philosophy—Reimarus was his name.^{lv} He had published only works on natural theology, you know, which was permissible, and [inaudible]. But then he had written also a critique of revelation, both in general and also of the miracles of the Old Testament and the New Testament, and this he had finished and completed. But he didn't publish it. He did not speak about it even to her who slept at his bosom, as they called it in the language of the eighteenth century. And then his children, however, after his death, gave it to a famous German writer, Lessing, and Lessing published it, concealing the identity of the author with a view to the good reputation of the children.

^{liii} In the Fourth Walk.

^{liv} Anthony Collins (1676-1729), notable primarily for what causes Strauss to note him, his deism.

^{lv} Hermann Samuel Reimarus (1694-1768); parts of his work on the historical Jesus was published posthumously, by Lessing as *Fragments by an Anonymous Writer* (1774-78). Strauss's "1770's" presumably refers to Lessing's publication of Reimarus's work.

Student: Is this the *Laocoön*?

LS: No, the *Laocoön* deals with painting and poetry; no. And this created an incredible scandal, an incredible scandal, in the late '70's. So that, I mean, today nothing creates any scandal any more. I think the last great scandal, if I see correctly, was Darwin. Darwin, because the Biblical criticism which came later²¹ didn't create that uproar which Darwin created. And now today, anything [goes]. I mean, was there any outcry on religious grounds when psychoanalysis appeared? I am not aware of it. There may have been individual critics, but I don't believe that there was a general protest. What I am driving at is this: I mean, this has in itself nothing to do with the philosophic truth or not. It is a mere historical truth, that in reading authors, say, prior to the nineteenth century on the European continent, and prior to the eighteenth century everywhere—including England—one has to consider the possibility of deliberate concealings. In some cases, however, one can observe it in detail; for example, the case of Hobbes, where one can make That is easy to show. [LS writes on the blackboard] Hobbes's theological views are a function of the established order. For example, up to In 1640 he still said episcopacy is a divine-right institution. Later in that year, episcopacy was abolished by the Long Parliament; and therefore in the next book which Hobbes published, in 1642, the episcopacy was no longer a divine-right institution. Now, his most daring book from this point of view is the *Leviathan*, published in 1651, under Cromwell, when all heresy laws were abolished; and there he had a legal right to say anything he wanted, and he went very far; and then after the Restoration when he brought out the Latin *Leviathan* in 1668, he retracted many of these things

END OF TAPE SIDE TWO.

¹ Deleted "on."

² Deleted "itself be universalistic . . . can."

³ Deleted "of."

⁴ Deleted "which."

⁵ Deleted "we always. . . ."

⁶ Moved "perhaps."

⁷ Deleted "look at."

⁸ Deleted "deny."

⁹ Deleted "mentions."

¹⁰ Deleted "It seems."

¹¹ Deleted, "wealth, the."

¹² Deleted "he has said."

¹³ Deleted "life."

¹⁴ Deleted “he rejects.”

¹⁵ Deleted “that God is.”

¹⁶ Deleted “we cannot even.”

¹⁷ Deleted “is.”

¹⁸ Deleted “is not reason.”

¹⁹ Moved “quite.”

²⁰ Deleted “which.”

²¹ Deleted “was not such a.”

Session 13

[In progress] **LS:** —unfair to the class by saying that I never mentioned Thoreau. I believe he was mentioned, or am I completely mistaken?ⁱ Surely I always think of this. But let us not fight it out, but I have the feeling I mentioned Thoreau. After all, it is very¹ I mean, one cannot think of Rousseau without seeing, there is on the one hand the extreme politicizing of life, you know—for us in Rousseau—and on the other hand, anarchism, a gentle anarchism, which is . . . and if I haven't mentioned Thoreau here, it was sheer accident. I am aware of that. But I shouldn't engage in apologetics.

Now, as for the simple life, or the country boy, as youⁱⁱ called it, this is indeed written large; but here we must distinguish two elements. On the one hand, this praise of the simple life is, of course, a very old thing, you know: the bucolic lyric of the ages, and especially the Epicurean view of the retired life; the garden of Epicurus. Nature has given us sufficient for our genuine needs, and everything else was superfluous, but this is an old story. What is the peculiarity of Rousseau's teaching regarding the country boy, deviating from Epicurus and bucolic poetry as such?

Student: The pigs?

LS: We come to that later. But more obviously, when he speaks about that? Well, the connection with democracy. I mean, the Epicureans and bucolic poets didn't draw any democratic conclusions from their praise of the simple life; whereas here the connection between the country boy and the rural democracy is surely—even if it doesn't appear there, it is obvious from Rousseau's thought as a whole. I mean, Jefferson's notion of democracy, you know, the famous remarks of Jefferson on this subject; but also in Aristotle, when he says rural democracy is the best democracy.ⁱⁱⁱ You know, the democracy in which the peasants, cultivators of the soil, predominate.

I liked particularly what you said about the analogy of taste and will, that a certain formal characteristic is the same: generality of the will makes the will good; generality of the taste makes the taste good. We have to go into that later on.

Now, what you said at the beginning about sexual desire, that Rousseau questions its natural character, whereas in the *Second Discourse* he seems to admit its natural character; we have to take this up. But offhand, without going into any details, what could be advanced in favor of Rousseau's seemingly strange assertion?

Student: Most sexual love would . . . as we see it in society, it is naturally a product of illusions and fancy; desire itself—

ⁱ There is no mention of Thoreau in the transcript before now.

ⁱⁱ Referring to the author of a paper written for this session, probably Mr. Boyan's, which was not recorded.

ⁱⁱⁱ *Politics*, 1318b7-15.

LS: This we know; I mean, in other words, this he has stated before, that the love *ad hanc*, this particular woman, that this is not quite natural; but *any* woman—like a dog concerned with any female dog—this we hitherto thought was natural. What could Rousseau have meant by denying the natural character of even sexual desire, indiscriminate sexual desire?

Student: That society, by the preoccupation with sex, or the emphasis on it—

LS: Yes, that is surely not But the simple desire, without any . . .² emphasis, no preoccupation. Well, it is not directly derivative from self-preservation, I think that is what he must have meant.

Student: [Inaudible] tyranny [inaudible] .

LS: Yes; so we will keep this in mind. Now, to say a word about the fundamental defect of Mr. Boyan's paper—I mean, I say this without any harshness, but simply to call a spade a spade—what would you say was the basic defect of Mr. Boyan's paper? I mean, nothing external, that he didn't type it and some other things, which I have of course observed; but something much more massive.

Student: I would have been very glad to hear him say something about why Emile, now in a position to be a tyrant and to crush all these insects in society, doesn't; or Rousseau doesn't let him become a leader of men, and instead I think it stops there, and he goes to—

LS: Well, he is still very young; I mean, he is too young and too unconnected. That would alone be a sufficient answer to your question. No, I meant something more.

Student: I was struck at the beginning to notice that we were talking about all of a sudden Emile's behavior, whereas prior to this, I don't think Rousseau ever uses any term of this nature in speaking of Emile.

LS: Well, behavior is not a French word; I wouldn't know which French word

Student: It is translated by the English word.^{iv}

LS: And what is it in French?

Student: *Le behavior*.^v

LS: No, no; I mean, but what does *Rousseau* say?

Student: No, the point is, which is the basic . . . the only thing you can say before that is *le comportement*.

^{iv} It's unclear whether the student is referring to Boyan's language or Foxley's. Foxley translates various French terms as "behavior."

^v As far as I know, this is not a French term. *Comportement* is correct. [Ed.]

LS: Well, maybe it was also *comportement* here, in Mr. Boyan's argument.

Student: I have never seen it in the text.

LS: Well, this reminds me: I know in Paris a place where I stayed for some time, and they called it *le hôme*—that was home—but using a circumflex on the *o*, you know, to make it somewhat more French. These things happen.

Well, I think it is this: we have seen the immediately preceding section, a very long one, dealt with the Profession of Faith, and with this radical reinterpretation of morality on the basis of religion. And now suddenly, the conduct of Emile is described without any reference to that. This you did not mention, and you did not reflect. I don't say that others would have done it—I am not unfair to you—but I think we would have to consider that.

Now, since we had to invest so much time on the first half of the Profession of Faith, so that we have not yet discussed last time's assignment, we have to begin there; and we will begin on page 258, paragraph 2, in your translation. This transition which follows immediately after the first half of the Profession of Faith, the half which dealt with natural religion, as distinguished from revealed religion. Will you read that.

Mr. Reinken: "The good priest had spoken with passion; he and I were overcome with emotion. It seemed to me as if I were listening to the divine Orpheus when he sang the earliest hymns and taught men the worship of the gods."

LS: You notice the plural. After all, it is seemingly a monotheistic doctrine; but he reminds him of a pagan singer. Go on.

Mr. Reinken: "I saw any number of objections which might be raised; yet I raised none, for I perceived that they were more perplexing than serious, and that my inclination took his part."

LS: Oh, God: "that the persuasion was for him."^{vi} Now, persuasion is, of course, something very different from demonstration. Go on.

Mr. Reinken: "When he spoke to me according to his conscience, my own seemed to confirm what he said."^{vii}

LS: Yes, you see, the conscience; it is based on the conscience, as distinguished from reason. But he does not even say his conscience *confirmed* it; he says it *seemed* to confirm it. So, there are quite a few qualifications which are important. Now, we cannot read the parallel passages in the other writings, in the *Letters Written from the Mountain*, and the *Letter to M. de Beaumont*, and last but not least in the *Reveries*; these passages are too long. But if I may just state the gist: in the passage in the *Letter of the Mountain*, the Profession of Faith is called the civil religion.^{viii}

^{vi} Or, as the Bloom translation has it, more idiomatically, "persuasion was on his side."

^{vii} *E*, 606; 458.

^{viii} In a variant. See *Oeuvres Complètes*, Vol. 3, 1593, note e.

Now, the civil religion is the subject of the chapter before the last of the *Social Contract*, i.e. a religion required for the existence of a society, especially a free society. The term civil religion is very old; it is well known from a passage in Augustine where he reproduces the thought of a contemporary of Cicero, Varro, a Roman antiquarian, who had himself reproduced the Stoic teaching that there are three theologies: poetic, civil, and philosophic.^{ix} Poetic, that is what the poets say about the gods; civil, what the legislators teach; and the philosophic, what the philosophers teach—and that is, of course, the only demonstrative teaching. Civil theology is the theology required for the existence and preservation of civil society. Now, in this sense Rousseau means the term civil theology; surely in the *Social Contract*, but I think also in the passage in the *Letters from the Mountain*. Let us read the beginning of the next paragraph.

Mr. Reinken: “‘The novelty of the sentiments you have made known to me,’ said I, ‘strikes me all the more because of what you confess you do not know, than because of what you say you believe.’”

LS: That’s also a very important hint for the reading: not where the Vicar agrees with the generally accepted views, but where he disagrees; and we have seen the crucial disagreement was the non-assertion of creation out of nothing, the implicit admission of this dualism of God and matter. Yes.

Mr. Reinken: “‘They seem to me very like that theism—”

LS: Or “almost like”: “*à peu de choses près*”: *almost* the same; they are not identical. This is an understatement.

Mr. Reinken: “that theism or natural religion, which Christians profess—”

LS: “which *the* Christians,” with the article: “which the Christians.” You know, he dissociates himself from the Christians. Yes.

Mr. Reinken: “profess to confound with atheism or irreligion which is their exact opposite. But in the present state of my faith I should have to ascend rather than descend to accept your views, and I find it difficult to remain just where you are unless I were as wise as you.”^x

LS: Yes; in other words, the clear point: the Rousseau who listened in that story to the Vicar did not agree with the Vicar. This much is clear. In other words, he was less believing than the Vicar was. Is this not the implication here?

Student: I had a question about something earlier, where you said—

LS: No, let us first clarify the meaning of that, if you don’t mind. So, in other words, Rousseau makes here a clear distinction between his views then and the Vicar’s view. Now, Rousseau, of course, afterward, when he wrote the *Emile*, might have ascended to the Vicar’s view; that we do not know. But at this point, clearly, he makes a distinction. I mean, this question we must always

^{ix} Augustine, *City of God*, 6.5.

^x *E*, 606; 458.

keep in mind for the interpretation of the Profession of Faith as a whole, A) how certain is the natural theology taught by the Vicar from Rousseau's point of view, or in other words, how far does Rousseau identify himself with that? Now, Mr. Boyan.

Mr. Boyan: When you say this, do you try to keep Rousseau then, insofar as the Vicar is Christian, as being a part of the Christian religion?

LS: According to this statement, which I think will be confirmed to some extent in the sequel, even the Vicar is not a Christian. Mr. Nicgorski, you are our expert regarding the second half of the Vicar's speech.

Mr. Nicgorski: It's certainly in that paragraph that we'll come to later, where Socrates and Jesus are compared, isn't it?^{xi}

LS: Yes, but still, would you not . . . I mean, if he in a certain respect prefers Jesus to Socrates, does this make him a Christian?

Student: No, it's that passage on revelation which is crucial.^{xii}

LS: Yes, crucial. So, he doesn't believe in revelation; therefore, he is not a Christian.

Student: The thing was that I just didn't see this thing that because he put an article in front of the word Christians, that he makes a distinction.

LS: No, well, in English it is not necessary, perhaps; but in French it makes it surely . . . If we would say *des chrétiens*, that would mean some Christians.

Student: Wouldn't that make it more partitive?

LS: No, then it would mean some other Christians; I mean, the more intelligent Christians do not do it. But *les chrétiens* means *the* Christians, and by this very fact he distinguishes himself from them. If someone would say in this country today, *the* Americans hold this and this view, doesn't the speaker somehow by this very fact distinguish himself—and especially if he disapproves of this view—does he not distinguish himself from the Americans by this?

Student: Well, I see it more if I were to say some Americans believe this, that it distinguishes.

LS: Yes, but this is the reason why I insisted on translating, against the spirit of the English language, I believe, the article; because the French language is in this respect clearer: the same as the difference between Greek and Latin.

Student: But if you say some, doesn't this mean that you . . .

LS: But he doesn't say some; he says *les chrétiens*, unquote: all Christians.

^{xi} E, 626; 474.

^{xii} E, 627; 475.

Student: But if you say some, you mean some of which I am one, but I do not happen to agree with some others.

Student: The opposite would be saying we Christians, which he certainly didn't say.

Student: Certainly if one says the Americans, one says practically that he is not American.

LS: Yes, to that extent; even if he happens to be an American citizen.

Student: It seems that his disagreement with the Christians . . . it becomes clear that he is distinguishing himself from the Christians by the sentence as a whole, rather than simply.

LS: Yes, sure.

Student: In other words, I could say the Americans and consider myself to be one of them.

LS: You are quite right: the context is important; namely, insofar as the Christians hold a view of which he disapproves, therefore he is not a Christian. Therefore. It is quite true. But let us see. That is only the beginning of the argument where he will take up the question of revelation explicitly, and so any doubt which might remain on the basis of a single sentence will be dispelled. Mr. Mueller.

Mr. Mueller: Do you throw this back to [Rousseau's childhood]? When you said that Rousseau might later agree with the Savoyard Vicar, his views might ascend later, do you throw this back in some way, literally, to Rousseau's actual childhood?

LS: No; you have to be a good boy, i.e. you have to take the sentence literally; and we have here the opinion ascribed to, say, the sixteen or seventeen year old Rousseau, who at that time believed even less than the Savoyard Vicar. This is perfectly compatible with the fact that thirty years later he might have fully agreed with the Vicar.

Mr. Mueller: Yes, of course; but I understood you to mean that you feel this must be—the Profession of Faith must always be read with the recollection of this, that something like that actually happened.

LS: No, no. Well, of course one has to consider it, but I only At this point Rousseau dissociates himself from the Vicar; what conclusion can be drawn from that is another matter. One can rightly say, no conclusion, because he might have changed his mind later on. And perhaps this is exactly the meaning of this emphatic disagreement at that time, to say, well, now of course, I agree with the Vicar; not more. But that he states here at that time he was less believing than the Vicar is undeniable; and so he draws our attention to the question. After all, he doesn't assert: now I agree; later on I came to see that it was absolutely right. Therefore it is an open question, and therefore one has to go into that.

Student: Is it significant that he compares the Vicar to Orpheus, who charmed the—^{xiii}

LS: Yes sure; to the rhetorical character: from his point of view it is a poetic, rhetorical, and not a demonstrative statement.

Student: He also charmed the beasts and the trees, made the trees leave their place.

LS: Yes, perhaps; he also regarded himself as somewhat sub-rational. That's possible.

Student: He came to a nasty end.

LS: Who?

Student: Orpheus.

LS: Yes; how far this would have to be . . . you mean by *la femme*. Yes, that is possible. One has to take this into consideration, too, surely. But one thing which appears from the immediate context is clear: it is an indication of the rhetorical, poetic character of the Vicar's speech. And the fact that he speaks here of gods, and not of one God, is of course extremely interesting. I don't have the other texts here. You see, the argument as given by the Vicar is compatible with polytheism, for the simple reason, what he proves is that there must be the will at the beginning; the will, rational will, underlying. But nowhere is it said that this rational will must be the rational will of a *single* divine being. That could be the rational will of a body, of a pantheon, of gods agreeing among themselves. That is in no way excluded. And the Archbishop de Beaumont accuses him explicitly of polytheism^{xiv}; and perhaps the argument of the Archbishop is not sufficient, but he surely saw a difficulty. Now, let us come now to the argument regarding revelation which begins in the sequel; and let us—we cannot possibly read everything—page 259, in the second paragraph.

Mr. Reinken: ““In my exposition you find nothing but natural religion; strange that we should need more!””

LS: “another one.” Another one, meaning one other than the natural religion.

Mr. Reinken: “How shall I become aware of this need? What guilt can be mine so long as I serve God according to the knowledge he has given to my mind, and the feelings he has put into my heart? What purity of morals, what dogma useful to man and worthy of its author, can I derive from a positive doctrine which cannot be derived without the aid of this doctrine by the right use of my faculties? Show me what you can add to the duties of the natural law, for the glory of God, for the good of mankind—”

^{xiii} *E*, 606; 458.

^{xiv} In the “Pastoral Letter of the Archbishop of Paris” (Rousseau, 2001, 9).

LS: No: “for the good of society,” he says; not “for the good of mankind.” Literally, “Let us see the order”^{xv}—which is more precise—“for the glory of God, for the good of society, and for my own advantage.” Three items, where the good of society—I say this for the benefit of Mr. Seltzer—is in the center. How far is the good of society furthered by a positive religion in addition to the natural religion, that is the question. In other words, as a civil religion, the natural religion is the best; and any addition creates a superfluous problem.

Mr. Reinken: “and what virtue you will get from the new form of religion which does not result from mine.”^{xvi}

LS: Yes, so that’s it. In other words, there is no rational ground—at least from the point of view. Well, he says from any point of view, but surely . . . I mean, the duties of the natural law are in no way made stronger, more binding, more evident by positive religion. And the implication is of course here, first of all there is no need for revelation; and secondly, in addition, revelation, positive religion, disturbs the peace of society; and therefore there is both no positive reason for it, and a very powerful negative reason against it. This is generally the argument. On page 259, the fourth paragraph.

Mr. Reinken: “One form of worship was required; just so, but was this a matter of such importance as to require all the power of the Godhead to establish it? Do not let us confuse the outward forms of religion with religion itself. The service God requires is of the heart; and when the heart is sincere that is ever the same. It is a strange sort of conceit which fancies that God takes such an interest—”

LS: And so on. “And in any special ceremonies.” At the end of the same paragraph: “Regarding the exterior cult, if it must be uniform.”

Mr. Reinken: “As to the form of worship, if order demands uniformity, that is only a matter of discipline and needs no revelation.”^{xvii}

LS: Literally, “of the police.” “*Purement une affaire de police*,” meaning of administration. So, in other words, he does not question the necessity of exterior uniformity—he does not question it—but this is a merely political or administrative problem. It has nothing to do with religion. So in other words, if society needs religion, it needs one religion; because otherwise, [there is] cleavage and danger to peace.

Student: Again, I am not sure of the views of the Christians of the time, but the seemingly correct understanding is that most of the worship—if he is addressing himself to Catholicism in particular—is by positive law of the Church.

LS: Of the Church, yes; but that presupposes revelation.

^{xv} The phrase is “Montrez-moi ce qu’on peut ajouter,” “show me what one can add.” I do not know what Strauss means by “Literally, ‘let us see the order.’ [Ed.]

^{xvi} E, 607; 459.

^{xvii} E, 608; 460.

Student: That's right. Oh, but he would have society setting up these [forms of worship]?

LS: Only society, yes. But to repeat, the main, the politically decisive point is that positive religion³ [is] essentially manifold—essentially manifold, even if in a given country it is only one—essentially manifold because it is not merely rational; and therefore, from the point of view of reason alone there is the possibility of a variety. Is this point clear? I mean, natural theology is meant to be *the* dictate of reason: no man exercising his reason can arrive at any other than the natural religion. Then there is positive religion. The positive religions are not supported sufficiently by reason; therefore there is a legitimate variety of them; and therefore the recognition of positive religion means to recognize in principle a variety of religions. Now then, that disturbs peace, and therefore the political question arises what shall we do? Either forbid all positive religions as disturbers of the peace—and that is not practical;⁴ [or] establish a single one, but with the understanding that the basis of that establishment is not divine law, but positive law. The true legislator picks that revealed religion which for purely expedient reasons he regards as the best. This is the famous solution suggested in the sixteenth century by *les Politiques*, as they were called—the Politicians—the people who tried to bring peace to France for purely political reasons, on purely political grounds—and which is of course distinguished from the religious view. And⁵ [the religious view] meant at that time ordinarily one and only one is the true religion, and it is the duty of the prince to establish the true religion, which was said equally of course, by Catholics and Protestants, and naturally, Jews and Muslims in the same way.

So this was one view. The political view, the Politicians' view was uniformity was absolutely necessary on political grounds, but the decision must be made *only* on political grounds; and so the practical question was [what to do if] sometimes,⁶ by some neglect of the magistrate or prince, a variety rises, as in France in the sixteenth century, and the new sect cannot be kept down by force any more. Then it is prudent to tolerate it. But this toleration is as little based on a sacredness of the principle of toleration as the forceful suppression of heterodoxy is. Is this clear? And then the third view, which was in the beginning limited to some extreme sects: tolerance as a principle. Tolerance as a principle; and that plays a role in some [versions] of English Puritanism, especially Cromwell's own regime, but also here in this country—I forgot the name—in Rhode Island: Roger Williams; and some Dutch sects, the Mennonites—I don't know how they are called in this country. Yes?

Student: The Baptists also.

LS: The Baptists, yes. This was the third principle.

Student: One point: Queen Elizabeth I and Rousseau, it seemed, had a lot [in common].

LS: Yes, sure; that is a well-known thing; or, in theological terms, with all due respect to Queen Elizabeth I, Hobbes [is the better comparison]. Hobbes and Rousseau fully agree, in the principle, that it is Only Rousseau makes somewhat more explicit than Hobbes does that this is strictly political, and is not an interference with the conscience, as he asserts in the last chapter of the *Social Contract*.

Student: This is historically . . . the Act of Uniformity which Queen Elizabeth had passed: you can see her hard at work trying to sweep all doctrinal questions firmly out of sight, under the rug; and the only thing that she's interested in is in fact—

LS: The peace of the realm.

Student: The peace of the realm, her security, and order; this is all in the uniformity—

LS: Yes. I mean, the French *Politiques*, the most famous of whom was Bodin, stated that theoretically before Elizabeth's time^{xviii}; there the question arose earlier. But Rousseau believes . . . Well, if you take a man like Locke, Locke of course takes it for granted that the commonwealth will be Christian; will be Christian, and not natural religion. And then he has only . . . He excludes, naturally, atheists, and all non-Christians. But he excludes then also, on intra-Christian grounds, Catholicism, because [Catholics are] subject to a foreign sovereign, the Pope.^{xix} This was, I think, the settlement established in 1688: I mean, so to speak, unlimited tolerance for any Protestant sects, but that's the limit. And Rousseau goes of course much beyond that: Rousseau demands only recognition of the natural religion; but he demands that. I mean, there is no . . . An atheist, a frank atheist, would be impossible in Rousseau's republic; that is clear. I mean, I say a frank atheist, because if, perhaps like M. de Wolmar in *Julie*, who goes to church regularly, and no one except his wife knows of his beliefs, that would not be cognizable under the law.

Student: One thing I have trouble with here: thus far Rousseau hasn't completely given us his new understanding of, you know, this modern republic and that thing—but he has made a distinction between society and societies or states and things.^{xx} When he is speaking here of society, can you take this in a generic sense, or should you take it in a specific sense?

LS: *The* society; what can this possibly mean in Rousseau except the individual civil society?

Student: The individual one; so that it means that each individual civil society could have—if there were three or four—they could have different cults?

LS: Yes, external cults. But what is truly required on the basis of natural right as Rousseau understands it, or of the principles of political right, as he would say, is the natural religion. The natural religion, which means only certain beliefs, and these beliefs as stated by the Savoyard Vicar. Now, external worship is necessary; after all, there must be some functions. I mean, say, when the meeting of the sovereign is opened, there must be some religious statement—and this is external cult. This is not prescribed sufficiently by the natural religion; that depends entirely on the decision of the sovereign.

^{xviii} Elizabeth I (1533-1603) and Bodin (1530-1596), author of *The Six Books of the Commonwealth* (1576) were contemporaries.

^{xix} John Locke, *A Letter Concerning Toleration*, ed. James Tully (Indianapolis, IN: Hackett, 1983), 50-51.

^{xx} It's unclear what the student has in mind here. Strauss's answer suggests that the student is asking whether Rousseau's teaching applies to an individual society or society in general, but, just as Strauss suggests, it's hard to understand how Rousseau could possibly mean the latter.

Student: But above all, this external cult cannot have intolerance in it, for instance, as part of the rules.

LS: Regarding beliefs, no; but the actions, the external actions, yes.

Student: Given his naturalistic side, or his parochial . . . his requirements for a homogeneity and uniqueness, a limited closed society, it seems to me that this natural religion is sort of insipid. It couldn't fulfill those demands, wouldn't be like the gods of the cities in classical times. That is, it wouldn't give the city the patriotic focus that would be needed.

LS: You mean, in other words, if there are no national gods. Yes, sure;⁷ Rousseau discusses it quite frankly in the chapter on civil religion: this cannot be done any more. And the reason why Rousseau is satisfied with it, and accepts it not only as, so to say, historic necessity, is because he thinks the ancients went too far; because they increased unreasonably hostility between the various states.^{xxi}

Student: I thought perhaps this openness toward polytheism that you mentioned earlier, or not excluding that, would—

LS: Yes, you can say that . . . at the limit of Rousseau, such a thing comes to sight. But I believe he never regarded this as a serious possibility. We have to go on now. In the sequel, on page 259, bottom, following, he speaks of the connection between prejudice and pride to . . . [That is] a great theme of Hobbes; meaning, this is essential.^{xxii} The belief in the truth of one's own revelation or in one's own group's chosenness, this is the core of prejudice, and is based on pride. As I said, a thought very dear to Hobbes.

He develops then in the sequel his criticism of revelation, in showing its strict absurdity: that all men's eternal bliss should depend on revelation is unjust. [It] is unjust, because of the difficulty of most men becoming aware of that revelation. The other point which he makes here I can only . . . we cannot read everything; that is impossible. All revelation, he contends, depends for everyone, except the original prophet, on human testimony. On human testimony: the individual believer does not know of that revelation except through tradition, i.e. except through human testimony; and so he cannot judge of it except by examining that human authority. And that means that historical criticism of the whole tradition and of the sources of revelation themselves becomes *the* condition of rational faith. And that means the large majority of men, who are incapable of that, will never have rational faith; and for the others it will also be an infinite task, because once a certain issue is settled, new findings are made—think what is going on in Biblical scholarship all the time: you know, findings in the Near East, and then these scrolls in the desert now—this in an infinite job to solve all difficulties, and therefore there can never be any genuine certainty. These are well known themes discussed in the eighteenth century, and they are here restated. And one argument, which is also connected with that, at page 262, paragraph 2.

Mr. Reinken: "When the authenticity of all these documents is accepted, we must now pass to the evidence of their authors' mission; we must know the laws of chance, and probability, to

^{xxi} Rousseau, 1994, 4.8, pp. 220-21.

^{xxii} *E*, 608; 460.

decide which prophecy cannot be fulfilled without a miracle; we must know the spirit of the original languages, to distinguish between prophecy and figures of speech; we must know what facts are in accordance with nature and what facts are not, so that we may say how far a clever man may deceive the eyes of the simple and may even astonish the learned; we must discover what are the characteristics of a prodigy and how its authenticity may be established, not only so far as to gain credence, but so that doubt may be deserving of punishment; we must compare the evidence for true and false miracles, and find sure tests to distinguish between them; lastly we must say why God chose as a witness to his words means which themselves require so much evidence on their behalf, as if he were playing with human credulity, and avoiding of set purpose the true means of persuasion.^{xxiii}

LS: And he goes on and develops⁸ this point: the doctrine is to be proven by miracles, and the miracles themselves are in need of proof; and this is a circle, and can never lead to a satisfactory solution. I do not go now into the long question. These arguments were of course very well known and they were answered by theologians, especially the Archbishop of Paris in his⁹ answers to these arguments.

Mr. Seltzer: I was just curious to notice that now he says we must study the laws of chance and probability; and before he said the laws of chance and probability couldn't convince him regarding creation, regarding the lack of creation.

LS: I do not know precisely to what you refer.

Mr. Seltzer: In the first half of the Profession of Faith, he said that no matter how much those who did not believe in creation would argue on the ground of the laws of probability, of fortuitous . . . [they] wouldn't convince him^{xxiv}; and now he says we have to go into it.

LS: Oh, I see. I think you are right, but I don't remember the other passage. If you are right this would indicate another difficulty in the first part of the argument.

Student: Isn't he saying now we *would* have to go into it; if we were going to pay attention to miracles we would have to go into chance and probability? He has already previously indicated his disinclination to the science of probability, and that only reinforces his determined sentiment to brush aside miracles and all these complicated

LS: Yes, but what is the precise question which he has in mind, which is not sufficiently developed by him?

Student: The Resurrection.

LS: No, any miracles would be an example. In the Resurrection, there would be the special question of the variety of the reports, that was the point. But regarding miracles in general, a miracle is an event which cannot be understood as a natural event; and now, how I mean, this was traditionally—was generally—accepted. The difficulty arose in modern times in this

^{xxiii} E, 611; 463.

^{xxiv} E, 579; 436.

form: how is it possible to establish what is naturally possible or not, given the imperfect character of our knowledge of nature? This was the argument as it came to the fore in the seventeenth century, and not before. Before, the notion was implied, we know substantially what is naturally possible or not. But this, with the new science, and in a way the implied provisional character of all we know at a given time, how can we know whether, with the future progress of natural science, something which is now declared to be naturally impossible may prove to be naturally possible? This, I think, is the point. And therefore there is no absolute certainty; and then the question of probability arises here. The question of probability also arises regarding witnesses. Now, how reliable are the witnesses; how good observers were they, you know, and this kind of thing; there you would have to weigh probability, this thing which in all historic questions is of course quite true: I mean, did Caesar win that battle for this and this reason? You have certain conflicting reports; weighing this is an element of probability which comes in. If Mr. Seltzer is right in his point—we cannot figure that out now—then it would of course also make questionable his early teleological argument. Because if a mechanical explanation of the genesis of the universe is only highly improbable, it is not impossible, do you see that? That would be the implication. You may be right; one should surely go into that.

Now, let us go on. Here he discusses . . . There is a discussion between the inspired and the reasoner. The inspired is the believer in revealed religion, and the reasoner is the philosopher. I do not know what the example is which he discusses; I don't remember¹⁰ [what] that is.^{xxv} This is a brief discussion in which he tries to show, make clear what the fundamental issue is. We cannot go into that now; let us turn to page 273, paragraph 2. This is the other point which he makes: this was taken up by Mr. Nicgorski last time. Where is that? Towards the end of the paragraph, where he speaks of the cruel dogma of intolerance.

Mr. Reinken: "It will be my business to make religion attractive; it will be my business to strengthen their faith in those doctrines which are really useful, those which every man must believe; but, please God, I shall never teach them to hate their neighbor, to say to other men, You will be damned; to say, No salvation outside the Church. If I were in a more conspicuous position, this reticence might get me into trouble; but I am too obscure to have much to fear, and I could hardly sink lower than I am."^{xxvi}

LS: Now, let us stop. He admits here that he exercises a certain reserve—that's the French word—a certain reserve which is obvious; because he is after all a Catholic priest, without believing in the truth of Christianity. That requires surely a lot of reserve on his part. Now, in the note here, read the beginning of that note.

Mr. Reinken: "The duty of following and loving the religion of our country does not go so far as to require us to accept doctrines contrary to good morals, such as intolerance."^{xxvii}

LS: Yes, let us stop here. This means, of course . . . this duty exists for all men. All men are obliged to follow and love the religion of their country *whatever that religion may be*; that is, of

^{xxv} E, 614-17; 465-67. The discussion begins with the question of whether the whole is greater than the part or the part is greater than the whole.

^{xxvi} E, 628; 476.

^{xxvii} E, 628; 476.

course, the implication, and this is surely incompatible with any preference for any religion on grounds of truth, naturally. The strictly political view. I mean, this is surely a *civil* obligation, an obligation on political, civil grounds.

Student: But it would be obvious that this contradicts itself in a way, because if you are obliged to love the religion of your country on purely positive or conventional grounds, you love conventionally that which asserts that it is true, and it sort of contradicts.

LS: I see. Yes, but, all right: what does this mean? Very good; but how do you argue from this point on?

Student: Well, obviously the love is the love in quotes.

LS: No, you must first make a distinction: either the man is aware of the untruth, or he is not aware of it. If he is not aware of the untruth, no difficulty arises: he embraces the religion of his country as the true religion. If he is aware of it, the Vicar shows you what to do.

Student: Emile will be aware of it.

LS: Now, here, the Vicar—we don't have to ascend so high—what about the Vicar: what does he do?

Student: Obeys externals.

LS: He obeys externals, exactly. Or we can also say, if you want to use a harsh word, hypocrisy: hypocrisy on the basis of those who know. Now, page 274, second paragraph.

Mr. Reinken: ““My young friend, I have now repeated to you my creed as God reads it in my heart; you are the first to whom I have told it; perhaps you will be the last.””

LS: “you will perhaps be the only one to which I ever will make it.” You see, he kept it close in his chest. Only young Rousseau has ever heard it.

Mr. Reinken: ““As long as there is any true faith left among men, we must not trouble quiet souls—”

LS: The “quiet souls” are those who cannot distinguish between truth and untruth in religion.

Mr. Reinken: “nor scare the faith of the ignorant—”

LS: “of the simple,” he says.

Mr. Reinken: “of the simple with problems which they cannot solve—”

LS: “with difficulties which they cannot solve.”

Mr. Reinken: “with difficulties which cause them uneasiness, but do not give them any guidance. But when once everything is shaken, the trunk must be preserved at the cost of the branches. Consciences, restless, uncertain, and almost quenched like yours, require to be strengthened and aroused; to set the feet again upon the foundation of eternal truth, we must remove the trembling supports on which they think they rest.”^{xxviii}

LS: So, that is the situation here: the ordinary certainties which were sufficient hitherto are no longer reliable; and therefore only the trunk must be preserved, i.e. the natural religion, that which, viewed from the Vicar’s point of view, is the teaching of reason. In the next paragraph, which is very long, towards the end, he says, “I always remain as I am”—do you have that passage?—“out of fear that insensibly the taste for contemplation becoming an idle passion makes me lukewarm regarding the exercise of my virtues, and from fear to fall again into my first Pyrrhonism,” i.e. skepticism, “without finding again the force to leave it.”^{xxix} So the Vicar is surely not a contemplative man; he is not a philosopher. This is also clear.

Student: Rousseau said something very like this in one of the *Reveries*, when he says why he is not going to reason^{xxx}

LS: Yes, but in that part of the *Reveries*—the *Reveries* is a complicated book—in that part where he identifies himself with the Profession of Faith. But the argument goes on; one cannot leave it at that. But this would take us too long now. Now, the next paragraph is again very important.

Mr. Reinken: “If my reflections lead you to think as I do, if you share my feelings, if we have the same creed, I give you this advice: Do not continue to expose your life to the temptations of poverty and despair, nor waste it in degradation and at the mercy of strangers; no longer eat the shameful bread of charity. Return to your own country, go back to the religion of your fathers—”

LS: What is that religion?

Student: Calvinism?

LS: Calvinism: that’s the advice given by a Catholic priest. Yes.

Mr. Reinken: “and follow it in sincerity of heart—”

LS: How can he do that on the basis of what he has just learned? Go on.

Mr. Reinken: “and never forsake it; it is very simple and very holy; I think there is no other religion upon earth whose morality is purer, no other more satisfying to the reason.”

LS: Again, a Catholic priest says that. And so, in other words, while preaching sincere belief, he doesn’t practice it, to put it mildly. Yes.

^{xxviii} E, 629-30; 477.

^{xxix} E, 630; 478.

^{xxx} In the Third Walk (Rousseau, 2000, 23).

Mr. Reinken: ““Do not trouble about the cost of the journey, that will be provided for you.””

LS: You see, he is not entirely bereft of practical sense. Yes.

Mr. Reinken: ““Neither do you fear^{xxx} the false shame of a humiliating return; we should blush to commit a fault, not to repair it. You are still at an age when all is forgiven, but when we cannot go on sinning with impunity. If you desire to listen to your conscience, a thousand empty objections will disappear at her voice. You will feel that, in our present state of uncertainty, it is an inexcusable presumption to profess any faith but that—”

LS: “any other religion except that in which one is born.”

Mr. Reinken: ““while it is treachery not to practice honestly the faith we profess.”^{xxxii}

LS: Is this not remarkable? I mean, you see, he was born a Catholic; but he surely does not practice sincerely the religion which he professes—unless he gives this interpretation, that the important meaning of Catholicism as well as of any other religion is to be a decent human being, and this wholly regardless of what he believes. Well, this he claims to do. Now, go on; no, that is all we need. So, I think this shows the moral or human problem very clearly, without question. Then there follows a very long note of *extreme* importance, which we cannot read, unfortunately. Now, what is the point? Here Rousseau does no longer take issue with revealed religion, but with the philosophers of his time. Read perhaps the beginning.

Mr. Reinken: “The rival parties attack each other with so many sophistries that it would be a rash and overwhelming enterprise to attempt to deal with all of them—”

LS: Which are these two parties?

[Inaudible exchange. To the effect that the two parties were the philosophers and the theologians]

Mr. Reinken: “it is difficult enough to note some of them as they occur. One of the commonest errors among the partisans of philosophy—”

LS: He calls it “*parti philosophiste*,” the philosophistic party, an obviously derogatory term. He does *not* agree with the philosophers; you will see why.

Mr. Reinken: “is to contrast a nation of good philosophers with a nation of bad Christians; as if it were easier to make a nation of good philosophers than a nation of good Christians. I know not whether in individual cases it is easier to discover one rather than the other; but I am quite certain that, as far as nations are concerned, we must assume that there will be those who misuse their

^{xxx} “Do not fear” is better.

^{xxxii} *E*, 631; 478-79.

philosophy without religion, just as our people misuse their religion without philosophy; and that seems to put quite a different face upon the matter.”^{xxxiii}

LS: Do you understand that? What is the difference between Rousseau and the philosophistes of his age? The philosophistes believe a nation of philosophers is possible, a nation of fully rational men is possible. And there he *sincerely* disagrees with them—and therefore the whole problem of the civil religion, which doesn’t arise for the others. I mean, the others were perfectly The very simple view: you have an enlightened despot, like Frederick the Great, or Catherine II of Russia, and she permits all philosophers to believe and not to believe, to express their unbelief as they see fit, and this is fine; and he uses religion in a simply cynical manner, for keeping the people in obedience. This is of course called an enlightened despotism. There may be the prospect of an eventual enlightenment of the people, but that is not essential. And Rousseau, as a lover of political liberty, rejects enlightened despotism; and therefore he raises the question, how can one have a free people? A free unbelieving people is impossible. Thence there must be a belief; and this belief is—in the best case—natural religion as described. That is the context.

In the sequel he speaks of Bayle: “Bayle has very well proven that fanaticism is more pernicious than atheism, and this is undeniable; but what he has not taken care to say, and what is no less true, is that fanaticism, although sanguinary and cruel, is nevertheless a grand and strong passion which elevates the heart of man, which makes him despise death, which gives him a prodigious resort—spring—and which one has only to direct better in order to draw from it the most sublime virtues.”^{xxxiv} In other words,¹¹ Bayle belonged to that same camp. Bayle was the first who asserted in public the possibility of an atheistic society—a great event in the history of Western thought. In other words, he stated for the first time openly what Hobbes had implied; and this was . . . Rousseau says, no: you will not get that; what you will get by an atheistic society is a degradation of men. A degradation of men; and therefore the philosophers are wrong; the attempt to enlighten the people will lead to a degradation of the people. This, I think, was surely Rousseau’s view. There are some difficulties here, but we don’t have to, we cannot take them up now.

Student: Nietzsche in a way surely shares this view about modern philosophy. Rousseau says later “assaults the people’s life.”^{xxxv}

LS: Yes; one of the, perhaps the greatest historical injustice which Nietzsche committed was never to make clear how much he owes to Rousseau. They have very much in common also. And he detested so much Rousseau and what he stood for, that he neglected to emphasize that his position is unintelligible except as a reply to Rousseau above all. Surely.

END OF TAPE SIDE ONE

Student: —atheism, could one defend the position that the consequence should be followed; and, in other words, isn’t part of Rousseau’s moral teaching defensible from the atheistic point of

^{xxxiii} E, 632; 479.

^{xxxiv} E, 632-33; 479.

^{xxxv} A paraphrase of part of the sentence that follows the passage just quoted.

view, the strictly, look into your conscience, and rather the development of conscience from *amour-propre*, and so forth—and the recognition politically of the conscience as such . . . ?

LS: But what does this mean? I mean, I don't understand that. Because there is in the first place an erroneous conscience; and then the question is, what is the right of the erroneous conscience. The Anglo-Saxon countries have been extremely liberal in this respect, if you think of the case of conscientious objectors, but one can also say they were never in such dire danger as the continental nations were. And one doesn't know—what would happen to conscientious objectors in the case of an extreme emergency is hard to say. But so, the question of What does it mean, precisely?

Student: I thought that Rousseau himself believes that there is a conscience which can tell a man what to do.

LS: Since you say you believe it, I say I do not believe it. I think what Rousseau means by belief, that is . . . what the Savoyard Vicar, especially says, but this—for Rousseau, as I have tried to explain more than once, on the basis of what we have read, morality emerges through a transformation of self-preservation, *amour de soi*, via *amour-propre*, and pity, you know: enlightened compassion. This is that. But enlightened compassion, this is not simply . . . I mean, you have a criterion here: is this really enlightened compassion which induces you to favor this action or not? I mean, you cannot merely say my conscience tells me, period; that's impossible.

Student: The thing is, what I'm asking¹² [is] whether enlightened compassion, then, isn't atheistic, or has no connection, or no necessary connection with religion as such.

LS: I can only say, there are two moralities: there is a morality which Rousseau presented prior to the Profession of Faith, which is surely atheistic: and there is the morality implied in the Profession of Faith, which is theistic. And this question we have been discussing all the time: is the Profession of Faith Rousseau's own teaching, or is it only the teaching of the Savoyard Vicar? And as I understand Rousseau, this plea of conscience in the way in which the Savoyard Vicar raises it is not tenable; because interpreted, the conscience as Rousseau understands it means, is enlightened compassion. And that is a very complex thing whose origin we have discussed; but which¹³ [means], then, enlightened compassion, meaning mere compassion, will not do: then you have a compassion with a condemned criminal which is unenlightened, because you do not take into consideration the victims of the criminal. The only thing one could say regarding the statement of Bayle is this, that Bayle admits what Rousseau doesn't mention here, that the concern with glory—and also, of course, glory of one's country—would be, could be as effective in atheists as in non-atheists; and therefore there could be a patriotic motive there as well.^{xxxvi} But Rousseau's objection is probably that this desire for glory will not be effective in a sufficiently powerful way in the majority of men; and therefore if there are no religious sanctions for politically or socially good actions, they will not come forth.

^{xxxvi} Bayle makes his famous argument concerning a commonwealth of atheists in *Various Thoughts on the Occasion of a Comet* (1682). For the particular arguments considered here, see especially sections 172 and 173.

Student: You said the same thing, perhaps, about enlightened compassion, that is would not be strong enough.

LS: Yes, I think so; I think that is what he means. Now, let us see. We have to consider a few more passages. If you turn to page 278, the fourth paragraph, in the note. He tells here a story about the Persians.

Mr. Reinken: “Must I think that the idea of this bridge where so many iniquities are made good is of no avail? If the Persians were deprived of this idea, if they were persuaded that there was no Poul-Serrho, nor anything of the kind, where the oppressed were avenged of their tyrants after death, is it not clear that they would be very much at their ease—”

LS: “that *these*”—meaning the tyrants—“would be very much at their ease.”

Mr. Reinken: “and they would be freed from the care of appeasing the wretched?”

LS: From which they would not be [freed] if they¹⁴ [believed] in this punishment after death. Yes.

Mr. Reinken: “But it is false to say—”

LS: No: “It is therefore false to say.”

Mr. Reinken: “that this doctrine is hurtful; yet it would not be true.”

LS: No: “it is therefore false that this doctrine is not damaging, harmful; hence it would not be true.”^{xxxvii} This is what he says; now, what does it mean? The doctrine of punishment after death, the denial of punishment after death is harmful, and therefore that denial is untrue. Namely What is the premise? [The argument proceeds here] on the basis of the principle which is accepted by the Vicar, that the truth is not harmful to man. Only on this basis [can it proceed]—a rather complicated statement. We must now jump quite a bit if we want to do Well, in the sequel he states the situation roughly, simply: there is no alternative between the crudest egoism on the one hand, and the belief in God and¹⁵ [the afterlife] on the other. Let us turn to page 281, the third paragraph.

Mr. Reinken: “What! Must I abdicate my authority when most I need it? Must I abandon the adult to himself just when he least knows how to control himself, when he may fall into the gravest errors? Must I renounce my rights when it matters most that I should use them on his behalf?^{xxxviii} Who bids you renounce them; he is only just becoming conscious of them. Hitherto all you have gained has been won by force or guile—”^{xxxix}

LS: Let us stop here. That is, I think, the strongest remark he makes about his education of young Emile. He has been educated through force—the greater force of the tutor than the pupil—

^{xxxvii} E, 635; 481.

^{xxxviii} Foxley leaves out “*Vos droits!*” or “Your rights!”.

^{xxxix} E, 639; 484.

and by guile; and this was necessary in order to bring about perfect freedom from prejudice. That confirms what I said at the beginning,¹⁶ [with] quite a few of you disagreeing with me, that prejudice is natural. More simply, in this case—do you remember, we discussed the case—can a child distinguish between willing and non-willing objects, between human beings who wish to harm him and the chair which does not wish to harm him? And I denied that; and I said therefore since it is so, since the child cannot distinguish between willing and non-willing beings, he becomes necessarily, if left to himself, in Rousseau's sense, superstitious; and all these elements of pride and anger and so, of which he spoke, by natural necessity arise in the child. And therefore it is necessary to counteract that by force and by guile. I believe this passage is crucial for the understanding of the whole thing.

Student: Wouldn't the result of that then be that the savage, not in a tribe, but the savage left to himself would of necessity not be good?

LS: Of course not: Rousseau said—we have found that—after he has paid the great compliments to the savages, he said they are cruel, period. Sure, there is no question. I mean, the statement man is by nature good, this big slogan, as it were, written in golden letters, needs a very long interpretation in order to bring—so that one can bring out what it exactly means. Man is by nature good means for Rousseau no more than that man can within limits bring about—establish a good society without recourse to divine revelation. That is the simple practical meaning.

Student: The religion of the Savoyard Vicar: is this not suitable for Emile?

LS: Oh, that is *the* thing; that is the only thing by

Student: That is suitable for Emile.

LS: Yes.

Student: Then the Savoyard Vicar is as Emilian in his character as Emile himself. He came to have [inaudible] and his character by chance, without Rousseau, without the tutor there using force and guile; here this man came from poverty and so forth, and went through a very peculiar road.

LS: I really don't see the difficulty.

Student: I mean, if a few Emiles emerge in a society by chance

LS: No, Rousseau would say there are quite a few Emiles; I mean, not everyone, but quite a few. But there are not sufficient tutors like Rousseau around; and not enough parents who would entrust their children to such a paragon of educators, that is the point.

Student: But it is the role of the philosopher that is

LS: Yes, well, Rousseau *is* in this sense a philosopher. [Inaudible]. Now, one statement regarding the situation as a whole, on page 293, paragraph 4, in the second half of this paragraph.

Mr. Reinken: “If I introduce him into society with no object but to teach him, he will learn more than I want. If I keep him apart from society, what will he have learnt from me? Everything perhaps, except the one art absolutely necessary to a civilised man—”

LS: Oh, God: “to man and to the citizen.” You see how incredible that M.A. is—I say this as a comfort to those among you who are not M.A.’s. And what is that, the art most necessary to man and the citizen?

Mr. Reinken: “the art of living among his fellow-men.”^{x1}

LS: “to know how to live with his similars,” literally. Here, that is the key passage: the art which the *man*, the human being, has to learn is *identical* with the art which the citizen has to learn. You remember the statement at the beginning, of the antagonistic character of the man and the citizen? They have now been united. They have now been united; and how have they become united? What was the machine or the instrument which made possible the union of man and citizen?

Student: “The Profession of Faith.”

LS: “The Profession of Faith,” sure. Well, very simply [LS writes on the Blackboard]: what is the difference between man and the citizen? Man—I mean man in the fullest sense, the highest development—is a being who lives purely rationally, without any prejudices whatever. The citizen necessarily has prejudices. Therefore no union. But Emile is now transformed into a citizen because he has become subjected to prejudices, but to the most reasonable prejudices, to the minimal prejudices, without which political life is not possible. So this is where we stand now. Now, in the sequel—we approach only now today’s assignment, but a few things at least must be said about that—now finally, he enters society, and that becomes absolutely necessary because he is about to, he is supposed to, marry very soon. He must meet women, girls, in order to find the one best for him, who is provisionally called Sophie—wisdom. So, to set up an ideal, which a priori depreciates almost every woman whom he is going to meet—it makes him immune to the wiles of the fair sex—that is Rousseau’s notion of how to do that. Now here in this connection, page 294, in the first paragraph. We won’t read the whole; let us read the second half of that paragraph.

Mr. Reinken: “No matter that the person I describe is imaginary, it is enough to disgust him with those who might have attracted him—”

LS: Namely, this object which I will paint to him will disgust him¹⁷ [with] those who might tempt him. Well, it is of course based on a certain difficulty, because whatever the defects of the women he may meet might be—and I have no doubt that they will be considerable—they are alive; and this one is not alive. And this we must never overlook.

^{x1} E, 655; 498.

Mr. Reinken: “it is enough if it is continually suggesting comparisons which make him prefer his fancy to the real people he sees; and is not love itself a fancy, a falsehood, an illusion? We are far more in love with our own fancy than with the object of it.”^{xli}

LS: Let us stop here at the moment. True love is delusion—Emile ceases to be without prejudices in more than one respect. I mean, he is in a way also protected against true love—or is this wrongly understood? No, I am sorry; I just said it wrongly. Just as he is undergoing a prejudice first in the case of sitting at the feet of the Savoyard Vicar, he is now undergoing another prejudice, by becoming subject to the delusions of love. This is a parallel event. Did I make it clear now? I garbled it at first. You know, these are parallel events, this submission to religion and the submission to the delusions of love. Both fulfill the same function: both make possible the union of man and the citizen. The citizen as citizen is of course married—I mean, some empirical evidence as to the existence of bachelors notwithstanding—i.e. the normal citizen is of course married. And then he takes up—well, we must disregard now what he says about sex here, all that: it is by no means uninteresting, but we cannot go into that—we must turn to the broad subject which is taken up on page 305, or thereabouts, and that is taste. Now, he is to enter society, find society; society, in which it is most important to be a man of taste. And this is an occasion for Rousseau to develop his thoughts about taste. We might perhaps read—let me see; that is too long. Now, what is the key point. What is the key point; can you repeat that, Mr. Boyan?

Mr. Boyan: About taste? Well, in form it’s just like will. When it’s generalized . . .

LS: Yes, but what is taste, in contradistinction to will?

Mr. Boyan: Oh, yes: taste concerns what is pleasing to us, not what’s necessary to us.

LS: Or useful, yes. Taste exercises itself only on indifferent things, or at most, of interests of amusement, and not on those things which have a relation to our needs. To judge our needs, taste is not necessary; mere appetite suffices. Perhaps we read a bit; the paragraph after this.

Mr. Reinken: “Taste is natural to men; but all do not possess it in the same degree”^{xlii}

LS: Now, go over to the next paragraph.

Mr. Reinken: “In the latter case it is no longer true that good taste is the the taste of the majority.”

LS: Meaning in a corrupt society, generally speaking.

Mr. Reinken: “Why is this? Because the purpose is different. Then the crowd has no longer any opinion of its own, it only follows the judgment of those who are supposed to know more about it; its approval is bestowed not on what is good, but on what they have already approved. At any

^{xli} *E*, 656; 499.

^{xlii} *E*, 672; 512.

time let every man have his own opinion, and what is most pleasing in itself will always secure the most votes.”^{xliii}

LS: Yes, that is indeed a parallel, as Mr. Boyan has said. If each follows generally his own judgment, then there is—there would be no badness, and there would be no bad taste. The trouble is that fashions, opinions, intervene which destroy our judgment regarding the useful as well as regarding the agreeable or beautiful. By nature the good taste is the taste of the great number, Rousseau says. Now, there are, of course, great difficulties which Rousseau tries to dispose of. Let us turn to page 307, second paragraph.

Mr. Reinken: “These are the elementary considerations which I shall lay down as principles when I discuss with Emile this matter which is by no means indifferent to him in his present inquiries. And to whom should it be a matter of indifference? To know what people may find pleasant or unpleasant is not only necessary to any one who requires their help, it is still more necessary to any one who would help them—”

LS: “who would wish to be useful to them.”

Mr. Reinken: “you must please them if you would do them service; and the art of writing is no idle pursuit if it is used to make men hear the truth.”^{xliv}

LS: Now, this is of course very important for understanding Rousseau’s whole literary activity. After all, he was a master of the art of writing. Now, what does he mean? Taste is required in order to please men; not to repel them. And this is necessary for the art of writing the truth. Let us reflect on this for one moment. Look at our present social science. Well, that is not said out of any malice, but only in order to . . . although the appearance of malice cannot be avoided. Now, obviously, they don’t write well; and they don’t even try to. Why is that? What is the root of that? It is not mere incompetence; it has a more fundamental reason: because they do not address men as men; they address only the members of a profession, you see. As little as plumbers as plumbers would be concerned with expressing themselves beautifully, as little can you say this of social plumbing, if one can call it that way. No, social engineering is said; and the difference of engineering and plumbing is one of degree rather than . . .

Student: Sometimes they call it sanitary engineering.

LS: Still, would this not be closer to plumbing proper? Yes. Now what is this art of writing? What has Rousseau in mind? He doesn’t develop it, because he can simply count on some knowledge of what good writing is on the basis of French classical literature, and ultimately classical literature proper. In other words, one would have to read or reread Cicero’s rhetorical writings to get a notion of what was traditionally understood by good writing. One can make very amusing experiences¹⁸ [of] that; for example, I mean, variety: one traditional notion was good writing means among other things, also *copiose dicere*, copiously to speak, i.e. you have to have a reasonable variety of expression, because variety in itself is pleasant. I don’t think that this is a rule belonging to the highest order of writing, but for practical purposes it is very

^{xliii} E, 672; 513.

^{xliv} E, 673; 514.

important; and you see it when you see the present-day slang, the amazing absence of variety. I mean, even As some of you might have guessed, I observe from time to time TV—and not only Western movies, but also political speeches—and the amazing poverty of adjectives I mean, for example, everything good is called by everyone “tremendous.” Is this not true? I mean this, I think, is not good. I remember one point which I have frequently referred to in class, which impressed me because it was of an entirely different kind, told by Miss Perkins in her book on Roosevelt, *The Roosevelt I Knew*; and whatever one may think of some policies of F.D.R., this surely was a great compliment to him. She elaborated a statement for him—you know, ghost-writing—on some social welfare things on which she was much more competent than he was, and she ended with a sentence: “We want an all inclusive society.” Roosevelt accepted the whole speech, with one change, the last one: “We want a society where no one is left out.”^{xlv} That showed his sense of language: it is infinitely more powerful. But generally speaking, one can say that what is meant, something which attracts attention and which keeps attention alive. Now if you address readers who are bound by their Hippocratic oath to wade through everything you might write, then you have no incentive to take care of it, of course. This is what Rousseau means, I think: the writer must be agreeable to the readers not so much by *what* he says—for the truth is not necessarily pleasant—but how he says it. And this is even the duty of every teacher. I think that is what Rousseau understands. Now, he develops this theme more fully by speaking of the superiority of the classics as masters of style. We might read on page 309, the second paragraph.

Mr. Reinken: “Speaking generally Emile will have more taste for the books of the ancients than for our own, just because they were the first, and therefore the ancients are nearer to nature and their genius is more distinct. Whatever La Motte and the Abbé Terrasson may say, there is no real advance in human reason—”

LS: “No progress,” “no true progress of reason.”

Mr. Reinken: “for what we gain in one direction we lose in another; for all minds start from the same point, and as the time spent in learning what others have thought is so much time lost in learning to think for ourselves, we have more acquired knowledge and less vigour of mind. Our minds like our arms are accustomed to use tools for everything, and to do nothing for themselves. Fontenelle used to say that all these disputes as to the ancients and the moderns came to this—Were the trees in former times taller than they are now. If agriculture had changed, it would be worth our while to ask this question.”^{xlvi}

LS: Rousseau seems to imply agriculture has not changed, i.e. the culture of the mind has not changed. This is very important to keep in mind: Rousseau questions progress in the decisive respect. The preponderant view at that time was surely progress, and based on a simile used by Pascal, for example, but stemming from a medieval writer—I do not know the name—that of course the great writers like Aristotle were greater than we dwarfs, but we dwarfs are sitting on the shoulders of these giants, and therefore we can see further ahead.^{xlvii} And then the famous

^{xlv} Frances Perkins, *The Roosevelt I Knew* (New York: Viking Press, 1946), 113.

^{xlvi} *E*, 676; 516.

^{xlvii} The comparison was famously used by Newton in his February 5, 1676 letter to Robert Hooke. It goes back to at least the first century Roman poet, Lucan.

fact, which is undeniable, that today at least high school boys can solve mathematical problems with ease which Archimedes could not solve—you know, this seems to . . . But Rousseau says, the high school boy does not by this very fact become an Archimedes; he has learned what Archimedes had to acquire. And this was of course a much greater point. So in the decisive respect, man starts at every time at the same point. I believe in the age of historicism this is something which one must not forget. Now, the sequel is of utmost importance. We can perhaps read some of them, if you will turn to page 310, in the third paragraph.

Mr. Reinken: “The better to unfold my idea, allow me for a moment to leave Emile, whose pure and wholesome heart cannot be taken as a rule for others, and to seek in my own memory for an illustration better suited to the reader and more in accordance with his own manners. There are professions which seem to change a man's nature, to recast, either for better or worse, the men who adopt them. A coward becomes a brave man in the regiment of Navarre. It is not only in the army that esprit de corps is acquired, and its effects are not always for good. I have thought again and again with terror that if I had the misfortune to fill a certain post I am thinking of in a certain country—”

LS: “in certain *countries*.”

Mr. Reinken: “before tomorrow I should certainly be a tyrant, an extortioner, a destroyer of the people, harmful to my king, and a professed enemy of mankind, a foe to justice and every kind of virtue.”^{xlvi}

LS: In other words, in a corrupt society, where you cannot accept any office without doing exactly that. Now the next paragraph.

Mr. Reinken: “In the same way, if I were rich I should have done all that is required to gain riches; I should therefore be insolent and degraded, sensitive and feeling only on my own behalf, harsh and pitiless to all besides—”

LS: And so on. The next paragraph.

Mr. Reinken: “But in one respect I should be very unlike them; I should be sensual and voluptuous rather than proud and vain, and I should give myself up to the luxury of comfort rather than to that of ostentation. I should even be somewhat ashamed to make too great a show of my wealth, and if I overwhelmed the envious with my pomp I should always fancy I heard him saying, ‘Here is a rascal who is greatly afraid lest we should take him for anything but what he is.’”^{xli}

LS: Now, let us read the beginning of the paragraph after the following.

^{xlvi} E, 678; 517.

^{xli} E, 678; 517-18.

Mr. Reinken: “I should also keep as close as possible to nature, to gratify the senses given me by nature, being quite convinced that, the greater her share in my pleasures, the more real I shall find them.”^l

LS: Read the last sentence of this paragraph, please.

Mr. Reinken: “If I wished to taste a food from the ends of the earth, I would go, like Apicius, in search of it, rather than send for it; for the daintiest dishes always lack a charm which cannot be brought along with them, a flavor which no cook can give them—the air of the country where they are produced.”^{li}

LS: Second half of the next paragraph.

Mr. Reinken: “I shall stay in one place, or I shall adopt just the opposite course; I should like to get all possible enjoyment out of one season to discover what is peculiar to any given country. I would have a variety of pleasures, and habits quite unlike one another, but each according to nature; I would spend the summer at Naples and the winter in St. Petersburg; sometimes I would breathe the soft zephyr lying in the cool grottoes of Tarentum, and again I would enjoy the illuminations of an ice palace, breathless and wearied with the pleasures of the dance.”^{lii}

LS: Yes; there are many more passages: let me see whether there is any one which seems to be particularly good. Later on, he says—I wish I knew where that was—it is probably page 318, at the top of the page. What do you read there?

Mr. Reinken: “No tedious flunkies to listen to our words, to whisper criticisms on our behavior, to count every mouthful with greedy eyes, to amuse themselves by keeping us waiting for our wine, to complain of the length of our dinner.”^{liii}

LS: No, this is. . . . In other words, the unpleasantness of servants or lackeys; that is not the passage which I meant. I do not know exactly where it is: “However I might change by becoming rich, in one point I would change never: if I had neither morals nor virtue, I at least would preserve some taste, some sense, sensitivity, some delicacy.”

Mr. Reinken: That is on page 315, bottom paragraph.^{liv}

LS: Yes; that we read. Turn to page 319 at the end of the second paragraph.

Mr. Reinken: “Whatever you do, you cannot torment men for ever without experiencing some amount of discomfort; and sooner or later the muttered curses of the people will spoil the flavor of your game.”^{lv}

^l E, 678-79; 518.

^{li} E, 679; 518.

^{lii} E, 679; 519.

^{liii} E, 688; 526.

^{liv} E, 685; 523.

^{lv} E, 690; 528.

LS: Yes; in other words, it is extremely imprudent to oppress the lower classes. The beginning of the next paragraph.

Mr. Reinken: “Again, monopoly destroys pleasure.”

LS: “The exclusive pleasures are the death of pleasure.” Yes.

Mr. Reinken: “Real pleasures are those which we share with the crowd—”

LS: “with the people.”

Mr. Reinken: “we lose what we try to keep to ourselves alone. If the walls I build round my park transform it into a gloomy prison, I have only deprived myself, at great expense, of the pleasure of a walk—”^{lvi}

LS: Yes; now the paragraph after the next.

Mr. Reinken: “You will say, no doubt, that such amusements lie within the reach of all, that we need not be rich to enjoy them. That is the very point I was coming to. Pleasure is ours when we want it; it is only social prejudice—”

LS: “only opinion,” he says. But that it would be—yes.

Mr. Reinken: “only opinion which makes everything hard to obtain, and drives pleasure before us. To be happy is a hundredfold easier than it seems.”

LS: “than to seem to be happy.” Well, really, I don’t know what they do. Is she an Englishwoman? Mr. Morrison, you should write to the authorities there. Yes.

Mr. Reinken: “If he really desires to enjoy himself—”

LS: No, no: “The man of taste, and the truly voluptuous man, has no use for wealth; it is sufficient for him to be free and master of himself.” Go on.

Mr. Reinken: “With health and daily bread we are rich enough, if we will but get rid of our prejudices; this is the ‘Golden Mean’ of Horace.”^{lvii}

LS: Let us stop here. So, this is more or less the end of the fourth book. And he describes here morality, a certain morality—and the name of Horace is not altogether misleading. One can call this morality as here described—as it *was* called in the eighteenth century—refined Epicureanism: voluptuousness, but genuine pleasure, not pleasures of vanity. Rousseau sketches in this part what one can call an immoral morality—I mean immoral to the extent that it is in no way based on any sense of duty; no duty enters here. It is emphatically natural, in accordance

^{lvi} E, 690; 528.

^{lvii} E, 691; 528-29.

with nature; and the importance of this fact derives from the fact that this follows on the Profession of Faith. You see now the structure of Book 4—no: Book 3 and 4 we have to take together. [Blackboard] You remember the ambiguity: which of these two books is central? Book 3; and Books 4—let us call Book 4, 4 (1) and 4 (2). *This* is the Profession of Faith, and everything belonging to that. *This* is the morality of generalized compassion—you remember, we discussed this at some length: morality is generalized compassion, without any basis in religion; because this explicitly precedes any religious education of Emile. And here we have another morality, which is not necessarily incompatible with that, but which is in its substance different from it: refined Epicureanism. Both things have no religious basis whatever; and they surround this central part. I believe, in my opinion, this proves that Rousseau was very much concerned with developing a strictly a-religious morality. This is the point which you did not see—because one must always think what went before—and the contrast between *this* voluptuous refined Epicureanism and the preachings of the Savoyard Vicar is quite striking. Pardon? What does this sound mean?

Student: I am sorry: it was an act of, a mark of hearty agreement.

LS: Oh, I see. Well, that makes things easier. Now, of course there are quite a few things which we had The general statement about taste, at the beginning, on page 305 to 306, is very important. I believe it would be—if anyone is interested in this^{lviii} kind of thing—I believe it would be helpful for the understanding of Kant's aesthetics, Kant's doctrine of taste. If anyone is ever exposed to the necessity of studying that, he might very well consult these two pages. This remark is perfectly proper, Mr. Mueller, because we are students of political science, and only very accidentally can we be exposed to such a compulsion.

Mr. Mueller: Yes; I made a face only because I once looked at it.

LS: At Kant.

Mr. Mueller: Yes.

LS: Yes, I think the problem is, the primary statement of the problem is the same here as in Kant—the primary statement. So now, we have some time left, according to our liberal construction of what time means; and is there any point you would like to take up?

Student: Just to revive a question we raised last time: does Emile need positive religion? You said that the Profession plays a role, and that we haven't really settled whether positive religion is urged upon Emile on the basis of the Profession. Now, I would suggest that in the passage immediately following the end of the Profession, on page 278

LS: Well, this is hard for me to find; but when he speaks of Orpheus, you mean? Is this in this context?

Student: No, that was after the first part; this is after the second part.

^{lviii} *E*, 671-73; 512-14.

LS: Yes. “I have transcribed this writing,” the beginning passage.

Student: Yes. Now, in that passage, he says: “So long as we yield nothing to human authority, nor to the prejudices of our native land, the light of reason alone, in a state of Nature—”^{lix}

LS: “In the institution of nature,” which can of course Can it mean . . . ? No; in French it cannot possibly mean instruction, as in Latin. Yes, it is “the state of nature,” all right.^{lx} Yes?

Student: Translating that as “in a state of nature,”¹⁹ the whole implication would be to me that natural religion is not sufficient for Emile because he is not educating him for a state of nature, as we soon find out.

LS: Yes and no. Now, the fact that he uses the expression “*l’institution de la nature*,” and not “*l’état de la nature*” makes it There is a question whether he means the state of nature proper. Now, what does he have in mind? We have seen that throughout the education he was concerned with the future well-being of Emile, and therefore, for instance, he taught him to become a carpenter, you remember, so that he could earn his livelihood if his family would lose their money. So he has been educated without any prejudices, and he can live in any country from Lapland in the north to the Equator in the south—you remember these statements; he is able to live anywhere. Hence, God knows in which sovereign’s land and hence religion he will have to live: he must be able to adapt himself to any such conditions. So now, since he does not believe in any positive religion, but only in the natural religion, which natural religion imposes on him the duty to adapt himself to the accepted beliefs—accepted positive beliefs—he can live anywhere. So, in other words, the natural religion is *de jure* self-sufficient; there is no addition needed. But *de facto* there will always be an established positive religion, and therefore he [will be compelled to have a positive religion]—but *only de facto*; and one doesn’t know what Rousseau thought, whether future developments in Europe might not take away this *de facto* compulsion—that problem would be a long question. This is the way in which I would understand it.

Student: But this Rousseau says at the end of the paragraph that “I have no right to be his guide; he must choose for himself.” This is with respect to anything, in addition to natural religion. Now really, it’s Rousseau sounds somewhat moralistic here, that he cannot tell in which positive religion [Emile should be placed]; but isn’t the point more the one that you have just developed, that necessity will tell him which one, whichever country he happens to be found in . . . ?

LS: Yes, but you see, Rousseau is not 100 percent clear and unambiguous regarding this matter; he is not clear and unambiguous regarding the *whole* matter, as we have seen. The first place, the great ambiguity created by the fact that it is not he who speaks, but the Savoyard Vicar. And then the Savoyard Vicar is in a way discredited by the fact that he has certain moral taints: I mean, the point, in the first place, that he is a Catholic priest and teaches Protestantism, and that in addition he had committed some unsavory things in his youth—you remember?—all this kind of thing.

^{lix} *E*, 635-36; 481-82.

^{lx} “Education” is better.

So there is an aura of ambiguity about the whole, so that any special ambiguity should not surprise us too much. You are quite right: one can read this passage as saying that natural religion will not be sufficient; it will have to be supplemented by some positive religion, which is of course not divine positive—strictly speaking—but civil positive. One can also with equal right understand it to mean in *fact* he will find in every country some positive religion established, you know? I believe one could not decide it on the basis of this passage. The burden of the whole argument of the Savoyard Vicar, and also of the other statements of Rousseau in the last chapter, or the chapter before last, of the *Social Contract*, is: natural religion, as described here, [is] indispensable, and every addition is at least a questionable thing, at least, if not simply bad. And the argument. . . . You remember the argument of the whole means that every revealed religion creates difficulties. Now²⁰ [when], on the other hand, of course, he is, he has said, confronted with the notion of an atheistic people, an atheistic society; then, he says, then I would prefer what he calls fanaticism, which means unqualified preference for a positive religion—that we have seen in this long note especially. I mean, what is your difficulty?

Student: No, it's [inaudible] resolved.

LS: I believe one cannot say more than that; because if he had any I mean, you would not for one moment suggest that he has some notion that there may be one positive religion which is true, which

Student: No.

LS: No; it could only be political.

Student: [Inaudible] on whether he felt some positive religion was going to be necessary for. . . .

LS: For practical purposes, yes; but not *de jure*. It would not be necessary. I think that is what he means. Mr. Morrison

Mr. Morrison: On the refined Epicurean thing, at the end: did you imply that that was inconsistent with what the Vicar had been saying, or just that it, was, you know, possibly another part . . . ?

LS: Well, perhaps not on the face of it, but in fact I mean, if you take the teaching of the Savoyard Vicar seriously, the union of body and soul, he says explicitly, is violent, i.e. against nature. Now, this whole way of life described in the last part is of course based on the principle that the union of body and soul is natural.²¹ The Catholic teaching is, of course, not that the union of soul and body is unnatural: that is the specialty of the Vicar²². Or, the Catholic gentleman here, Father Vaughan, am I correct that what the Vicar says, that the union of body and soul is against nature, is not the Catholic teaching? So, the Vicar But let me first satisfy your question. Now, if the union, I mean, to live as a human being, with body, is unnatural, how can there be any possibility to enjoy these pleasures of the simple meal, and the other things he mentions? This can only be grudging concessions, not more. Now, he does worse things than enjoying simple meals, as we have seen, but he does, he regards this as absolutely sinful, of course:²³ [those are] failings. No, I would say, generally speaking I can only come back to my

plan. [LS writes on the blackboard] The Savoyard Vicar's section is preceded by an explicitly atheistic moral teaching. *This is in fact* atheistic; not explicitly—in fact. They are not identical, because here, generalized compassion; and here, refined Epicureanism. *They* are perhaps not so . . . Even they are not simply compatible, you know? I mean, even these irreligious moralities are perhaps not simply compatible. But surely they are compatible to the extent to which they . . . because they have the same negative basis: non-religion. They are surely different from the morality as set forth here. I mean, read simply what he . . . The way of life as it comes out from the Savoyard Vicar's Profession of Faith is surely not one of a voluptuous, if *reasonably* voluptuous life as something wholly unquestionable, but a life of duty.

Student: But I . . . it hasn't struck me. I can't go back to the pages off-hand, but—

LS: Well, we don't settle any question here finally; that's impossible. Because we all would have to reread in order to make something absolutely sure.

Student: The way it did strike me was that this refined Epicureanism was in fact compatible, in a sense, on a practical level, in fact compatible with either of the previous ones; and I wondered whether in fact it wasn't in the nature of a synthesis, as you might say: a thesis, antithesis, and—

LS: That I doubt; that I doubt. I mean, I regard it as most improbable; but I cannot, without going now, having gone again over the moral section in the Profession of Faith, I cannot *simply* say you are wrong.

Student: In particular, it would be in the morality of the . . . in the Savoyard Vicar's thing. it didn't seem to me that the non-natural union of body and soul, which undoubtedly is there, had quite the sort of terrible restrictive, extreme puritanical guilt complications which would make it incompatible with . . .

LS: Then I can only say, why did Rousseau make the Savoyard Vicar—against all, at least all Catholic precedent, and I suppose also against Catholicism, but there I am not so sure—say that the human life, based on union of body and soul, is unnatural? In other words, a kind of gnostic teaching, which in itself necessarily leads to extremely ascetic consequences. Why did he go out of his way, as it were, to deviate from the teaching of the Church in this point of some importance? Now, come to think of it, I would say, now I am quite sure that I'm right, that he brought this—he emphasized this point of this assertion of the Vicar that the union of body and soul is unnatural—in order to bring out the contrast regarding morality between the Savoyard Vicar, on the one hand, and these two moral teachings on the other. I would say . . . after all, *you* would have to explain . . . You know, if he simply had reproduced a part and parcel of the traditional religious teaching, to that extent there would be no question. But [it's another matter] when he deviates from the teaching, just as in the case of the non-creation, that matter is not created—you remember in this entirely different context we spoke of that: the official teaching is creation out of nothing; everything has been created by God. The Vicar says, No! I exaggerate a bit, because he doesn't say it explicitly; he only says it in the form of a doubt:²⁴ God and matter [are] two principles—the Manichean view. *This* Manichean view is, of course, in itself the basis of a radical asceticism: you turn away from matter as the evil principle absolutely towards the

good principle. I think it would In other words, his “Manicheanism” would only give further support to what I said now. Pardon? You do not agree?

Student: I don’t think that he does in fact draw the ascetic conclusion.

LS: Of course not, explicitly—and it would also be very awkward for *him*, given the irregularity of his life, to emphasize that so strongly, you know?

Student: But he emphasized the duty part of it, which is the other side of it. At this point you have reached the stage where—at the beginning of 4 (B), as you might say—where you have reunited man and citizen. And at this point, of the two, the practical living as man and as citizen will be

LS: Yes, but the question is, is this so much a citizen point of view? Is this not a radically egoistic morality, if a refined egoism? Epicureanism, never forget, was an anti-political teaching; an anti-political teaching. But I am very glad you bring it up so that we see how many loose ends there are which we have not cleared up.

Student: The Catholic theology positively considers the separation of body and soul as unnatural, and uses that as a reason for regulations. And so, you are right

LS: Thank you very much; so I was right in this point. Mr. Seltzer.

Mr. Seltzer: Just to take up your point about 3 and 4 being taken together—Book 3 and Book 4—this *would* go along with what we were talking about regarding the center. When you look at Books 1 and 2, simply externals, the number of pages are almost identical with Book 5; so that we have

LS: I see; I didn’t do it: I do not have the first At any rate, on the basis of the most superficial knowledge of the *Emile*, one would say the core is the Savoyard Vicar, i.e. a part of Book 4. And on the other hand, when we came to Book 3, we saw that in a way this is explicitly said to be the central book; and I believe we have now the solution to this ambiguity—but we have Mr. Morrison’s authority again.

Student: Certainly Book 4 is the literal center—the Profession of Faith, that is—but it’s indicative of his emphasis on civil religion.

LS: Yes, both. But I think one must also take into consideration what precedes and what follows. And this, I would say [LS writes on the blackboard]—I would say that’s the center.

Student: I wanted to raise a counter-point. I would agree that this is a [inaudible], that there is a [inaudible] here; I am a bit skeptical on building the central business too literally, because did the censors not slash great slices out of Books I and II, and didn’t he complain about this? Didn’t he complain in the *Confessions* that they had taken out large sections?

LS: That I do not remember; and one would of course also have to know which sections; and even apart from that, one could rightly say that the point of view of the censor does not reveal the point of view of Rousseau. The censor could reveal what was regarded as objectionable; but this could be on very different grounds: it could be on purely political grounds. For example, some things which might be misunderstood by the French court, and this kind of thing. I do not know; I think that is irrelevant, immaterial, and

Student: What is not immaterial and irrelevant in this particular context is that this would alter the position of the center.^{lxi}

LS: Pardon? No. . . .

END OF TAPE SIDE TWO.

¹ Deleted "both."

² Deleted "I mean, no."

³ Deleted "being."

⁴ Deleted "then."

⁵ Deleted "this."

⁶ Deleted "if."

⁷ Deleted "that would be."

⁸ Deleted "that."

⁹ Deleted "reply."

¹⁰ Deleted "that."

¹¹ Deleted "this same."

¹² Deleted "as."

¹³ Deleted "makes."

¹⁴ Deleted "believe."

¹⁵ Deleted "otherlife."

¹⁶ Deleted "and."

¹⁷ Deleted "of."

¹⁸ Deleted "to."

^{lxi} The student has a point. Mr. Seltzer's point depends on Books 1 and 2 being roughly equal to book 5. If this equality is an accidental result of the censor's cuts, then it is no clue to Rousseau's intention, even if you assume that Rousseau used the center as Strauss and Seltzer propose he did.

¹⁹ Deleted “I would.”

²⁰ Deleted “then.”

²¹ Deleted “you know, this is not”

²² Deleted “the specialty of the Vicar.”

²³ Deleted “that’s.”

²⁴ Deleted “God and matter.”

Session 14

[In progress] **LS:** —it was not always easy to follow you, Mr. Mueller, and this had not only to do with the fact that you were so anxious to correct your manuscript, which is of course a very sensible thing, but also a difficulty for us. Now, let me see; there are certain very broad things which have not come out; perhaps we can bring them out now. How would you describe Rousseau's whole position regarding women, as presented here? We must make a distinction between Rousseau the man and Rousseau the writer: in other words, not his . . . his experiences which he describes in the *Confessions*, that's one thing.

Mr. Mueller: I wasn't intending—

LS: Yes, I know; well, what would you say is his theoretical view?

Mr. Mueller: It seems to me he idolizes them; he loves them; but it seems to me he has strong reservations, especially [in] the passages at the beginning. [Inaudible]. He likes them; he thinks they are very nice, and charming.

LS: Sure; it is not a very paradoxical view in itself. No, but if you think of what Edmund Burke said a generation later—and I believe he had Rousseau in mind—he described a certain French morality, and he spoke in this connection of “a sour, gloomy medley of lewdness and pedantism.”ⁱ Now, I have often thought of it when I heard of psychoanalysis, which also seems to be such a mixture of lewdness and pedantism, from an old-fashioned point of view. In other words, how would you see the difference between Rousseau and what is now accepted on the basis of the ordinary version of psychoanalysis?

Mr. Mueller: I don't think that only psychoanalysis, as I said, would dispel these superstitions, and I mean quite literally these superstitions, about insatiable desires, and so forth, which are certainly to be found in Montaigne, Rabelais, and all sorts of other good authors. . . .

LS: Including the modern ones.

Mr. Mueller: I think good judgment Maybe this age especially needs psychoanalysis for—

LS: Well, that is another matter; but if you look at it I mean, something may be necessary and still be an evil; and some corruptions might require medicines which would be wholly undesirable. But now, if you contrast Rousseau with the present-day writers on the subject, the scientific or theoretical writers

Mr. Mueller: Well, just a general contrast of the different role that modern writers and Rousseau would give to women.

ⁱ Edmund Burke, “Letter to a Member of the National Assembly,” in *The Writings and Speeches of Edmund Burke*, Volume 4 (New York: Cosimo, 2008), 31. The quotation is inexact.

LS: We would like to hear what, how you would describe this.

Mr. Mueller: How? Well, the woman in Rousseau's conception plays a somewhat secondary role, rather than an equal role that they play today.

LS: So in other words, Rousseau in a way accepts the traditional view of the inferiority of women—in a way. Yes, that is undoubtedly true. But if you look at it But is it lewd? Can one call this view lewd?

Mr. Mueller: No, I don't think, on No: he says at times women can be monsters, but about as monstrous as they get is being coquettes, specifically, or

LS: Yes, but this is trivial.

Mr. Mueller: How Rousseau became a man, that is trivial, too. But I think he idolizes them.

LS: But is there not a vein of cynicism, of what one would ordinarily call cynicism, in Rousseau?

Mr. Mueller: I think it would go with idolizing them.

LS: Yes, that is what you said. He idolizes women, and the opposite is also there, say debunking, cynicism; both of them, surely. But if one what is his front? That is always, I think, a helpful question. What does he oppose in this treatise? After all, every theoretical writer cannot help rejecting something with particular emphasis. And what is that view to which he objects?

Student: When you say theoretical, you don't mean that he

LS: I mean this is a theoretical book, after all.

Student: Yes. Well, he doesn't oppose custom for women.

LS: No, that no, surely not.

Student: I mean, he wants certainly better education than they were given at the time.

LS: This is subordinate; but what is the overall objection? Mr. Butterworth.

Mr. Butterworth: Isn't it the falsity and the luxury, all the false [inaudible] that are put forth by the women?

LS: That is not precise enough. That is true, but

Student: [Inaudible], and the salon.

LS: Yes, surely; the morality prevailing in their age. But that is true, but not sufficient. Mr. Schrock.

Mr. Schrock: I was just thinking of the enlightenment, and the—

LS: Exactly. Against the [inaudible]. That is what you wanted to say?

Mr. Schrock: And another thing: in other words, the enlightenment from the sexual point of view also, the equality that permits unchastity and even philandering.

LS: Yes, sure; but his front theoretically, I would say, is against [a] certain vulgar enlightenment philosophy. He speaks frequently in this connection of the wrong view of the philosophers.

Student: Yes, when he speaks of the enlightenment of our vices which . . . and the philosophy that might teach women to be equal in [inaudible].

LS: Yes; and Mr. Morrison.

Mr. Morrison: I was going to say something very similar. There is the notion of the assimilation of the sexes¹ [in] the thing, which is very hard to get, which is connected with that.

LS: Yes, and so therefore also his attack on . . . [and] his defense of decency, chastity, is very clear. That fits into the picture, you know; therefore the recourse to Rome, to republican Rome and Sparta, versus indecency, the elegant indecency of the age. That is surely the front which he takes, and that is in agreement with the general tendency for virtue against the emancipation of the lower things in man. Yes.

Student: But earlier he had praised the *Republic* as a tract on the citizen, and there the equality of women is promoted, or Plato attempts to place women on a level with men.

LS: I see. And . . . ?

Student: If this is an attempt to preserve—if this discussion of women is an attempt to preserve the morality, to preserve the inequality, the subjection of women—I don't want to push this too far, but—

LS: Now please, don't hesitate. Make an error rather than keep us in suspense as to the trend.

Student: Well, I don't know whether that mention of the *Republic* was simply ironical, or what, but . . .

LS: But what are you driving at; what is the alternative which you see? Hitherto we have said Rousseau fights for a rather old-fashioned sexual morality against the philosophers of his age.

Student: And earlier he had praised the *Republic* as a tract on the development of the citizen.

LS: At the very beginning.

Student: Yes.

LS: Yes, sure; but still, he doesn't say that Plato is right in every point.

Student: No.

Student: He says that [the typical criticisms of] the supposed community of women proves that people have never read Plato, but that what is [inaudible] bad in Plato is the attack on the family.ⁱⁱ

LS: I see. Well, we read this passage; that doesn't create any particular difficulty.

Student: Could two very simple extremes be put forth explaining Rousseau's position towards women? This idea of simplicity and purity, which he sets forth as ideals, almost—I was trying to follow a little bit earlier today that chimeric aspect of his writings, and these two things are always present—and then the other extreme would be impurity or indecency, and the opposite of simplicity.

LS: Sophistication.

Student: Sophistication, yes, which is sort of When you look at all his polemical writings, and even here—mainly here—it tends to be the biggest front and most obvious front, or at least his leading foot whenever he makes an attack.

LS: Yes, that, I think, is correct. But may I just say one point regarding Mr. Mueller's paper: the empire of women. I wonder whether this would satisfy you: there is a bad empire of women—and that is the French drawing-room of the eighteenth century, or for that matter, the Roman empire under Augustus and later—and then there is a natural empire of women. Would this satisfy you?

Mr. Mueller: Yes, it would. I should have made that—

LS: Would this dispose of the difficulty which you found, or the difference which you found, between the *Emile* and the *Second Discourse*?

Mr. Mueller: Yes.

LS: Would this take care of that? Because you say there is a contradiction between the two writings regarding the rule of the two sexes, or the role of the two sexes.

Mr. Mueller: Yes. [Inaudible phrase regarding Tiberius].

ⁱⁱ *E*, 700; 537.

LS: That I do not know; that is a long story. But this reminds of a passage in Machiavelli, where he discusses the question of a hereditary monarchy or non-hereditary, where Machiavelli says [that] generally speaking the adopted sons who became emperors were superior to the natural sons.ⁱⁱⁱ Maybe we find this difficulty back when we turn to the text. There are only two more points I would like to mention. You did not put a sufficient stress on the difference between Emile and Sophie regarding religion. You stated it, but you didn't state it with the necessary emphasis. And the last point; the passage which escaped me when reading it: the *freest* act of man, he says, is the sexual act.^{iv} That's indeed something to wonder. When we come to the passage we will take it up; because now we cannot go into that. Now, Mr. Seltzer, you had a point?

Mr. Seltzer: Most of it was covered; but in reference first to Schrock's point about equality: in a way, he talks about equality, and in a way there is an inequality, but it is certainly a different kind

LS: Well, you can say—how do they say it?—equal but different. So, in other words, equality may mean equal and not different; but equality may also mean equal while different.

Student: And also this would really This is a primary contrast with the classics—say, Aristotle; Plato, too—because of the teleology; man's difference is his capacity to reason.

LS: Which Rousseau, by the way, admits. But let us first state it very simply [LS writes on the blackboard]: we have one position which states: inequality equal to superiority, inferiority; and then there as another view, the modern view: equality unqualified, i.e. men and women are equal; there is no natural superiority or inferiority. Rousseau's position differs from both: they are unequal, but in a way, there is no natural superiority. They are unequal—they are different would be a better way of putting it—they are different without being unequal. This one can roughly suggest.

Student: He starts to say that, but doesn't he go off—he spends a lot of time demonstrating

LS: Yes, that is true. But in a way it remains; but we must follow the argument in detail for that.

Student: [Inaudible] trying to decipher the first few pages, which are about just this problem, and I think I can argue just as well that they are unequal; woman ordinarily has a stronger point, in that she is a woman

LS: Let us take this up coherently. This is very dark, I admit that. Now, I think we start best the discussion by referring to an earlier passage, in your translation page 298 in the third paragraph, in which it is said—that was mentioned last time—that the sexual need is not a true need—you remember that—is not properly a physical need. “It is not true that this is a true need”^v—in the middle of that paragraph. And I explained this last time as follows: the only true need is self-preservation. So in other words, the radical asocial character of man requires that

ⁱⁱⁱ Machiavelli, *Discourses*, 1.10.4..

^{iv} *E*, 695; 533.

^v *E*, 662; 504.

the . . . demands from Rousseau that he deny that the sexual need is a true need; because once you introduce that, you introduce the relation to procreation, in one way or another, to society. So, this is clear. And therefore a very great problem: where does this come in? We begin perhaps on page 321.

Student: In the light of the passage you last cited, may I ask then about the passage on page 281, in the first part of the second paragraph, where he says, “Nature’s due time comes at length, as come it must. Since man must die, he must reproduce himself, so that the species may endure and the order of the world continue.”^{vi} I am wondering about that necessity of sex, and yet not truly a true need.

LS: Yes, but still there would be . . . Rousseau has distinguished more than once the individual and the species. The *human* individual, at any rate, is capable to free himself from the shackles of the species, that would be my answer. And I believe that this extreme statement to which I referred is much more characteristic of Rousseau and his whole position than the other one, which is the view of common sense, and which would be admitted by everyone. You must not forget that in this whole doctrine—I mean from the days of Hobbes on—this creates a difficulty: what is the status of the matrimonial or conjugal association? Traditionally that was no problem: it is a natural association for the purpose of procreation of offspring; and the satisfaction of sexual desire as such was simply subordinated to this objective function. For Hobbes these relations are simply relations of lust—that is very interesting, lust—i.e. procreation is accidental, so to say a necessary accident following sexual union, but not its meaning in itself. And Hobbes also goes so far then to say that as regards the right over children, this is by nature in the mother, because she is the one who is immediately responsible for the fact that the child is not killed; any power which the father has is conventional: the natural power rests with the woman. You know, that “individualism” of Rousseau finds, I think, its clearest expression in this statement that the need for sex, the sexual need, is not a true need. The individual as individual is necessarily concerned with his self-preservation; but every other thing is derivative, and therefore less necessary. Mr. Mueller.

Mr. Mueller: I was just thinking of a connection between lust and death, then, the other threat to self-preservation, the ultimate threat to self-preservation. Maybe one can see in this, or at least one connection would be why this little girl, whoever she is, [inaudible] her specific catechism is about death, and . . .^{vii}

LS: Yes, but that comes later; that is not on the same level of the argument. And in addition, death is of no interest to these men: only avoidable death, the death about which you can do something—the death about which you cannot do something is not a practical subject. And as teachers of natural law, natural right, they are concerned especially with *that* kind of violent death which comes from other men, you know? I mean, it is . . . One of the most astonishing things which I have ever observed is that when Hobbes speaks of this matter—unfortunately I forgot the precise context—he does not even mention medicine—medicine, which is supposed to have² something [to do] with the avoidance of death—because he is absolutely concerned with that kind of death threatening us at the hands of other men. And therefore death as death is not

^{vi} E, 639; 484.

^{vii} E, 723-25; 556-58.

important, but death *qua* avoidable, death as threatening us at the hands of other people. And surely I must say we have to take this seriously, that someone who is certainly not an ascetic moralist says sexual need is not a true need. That is an astonishing assertion, but I think it ceases to be astonishing in the moment one reminds oneself what is, according to Rousseau, *the* true need; there is no question about the answer to that: self-preservation. And then you think about that, and for self-preservation proper—as distinguished from the preservation of the species; that is another matter—but why should this man concerned with his self-preservation be concerned with the preservation of the species? I think here Rousseau is really very radical from his point of view. Mr. Boyan.

Mr. Boyan: Does this [inaudible] in a sense an explanation of the contrast I drew the other day with respect to this subject in the *Second Discourse*, though there you . . . Would you say then that his statement that sex is a true need, a physical desire, in the *Second Discourse*^{viii}, refers to a true need of the species rather than the individual?

LS: Yes; which somehow finds its place also within the individual, but a less fundamental place. The rock-bottom thing is self-preservation, not the preservation of the species. I believe it is in a way a compliment to Rousseau's reasoning power, which one must never underestimate, that he goes to the end of the road. I mean, it may show the absurdity of the whole position with particular clarity, but it is some merit to be consistent. Mr. Morrison.

Mr. Morrison: I was wondering, you know, how, for this sort of thing, how far you can work it out. Is it, whether there is some parallelism—this thing which was mentioned, that this sexual act is the freest act—whether there is—[can you] tie this in with the question you just asked, about why the individual should be concerned with the preservation of the species; whether there isn't some kind of [connection] with the general will.

LS: No; but he would probably deny that there is a natural concern with the preservation of the species. He would say there is a derivative natural desire for sexual union. Now, this sexual union necessarily, by natural necessity, leads in most cases to the procreation of offspring. And then something else enters, again a strictly individualist feeling, commented upon by many authors prior to Rousseau, that people can—even the fathers—become interested in that living image, you know; and their pride, as it were—that's *my* child, my work, my handiwork—then it takes on an importance so they become more attached to their children than to other human beings; and so on. In other words, it would be strictly individualistic considerations; the considerations with regard to society would come up, indeed, by virtue of some act of reason, some generalization. But I must now use the authority vested in me by the Department of Political Science to ask you . . . We must now follow the argument. Let us turn to page 321, paragraph 4.

Mr. Reinken: “But for her sex, a woman is a man; she has the same organs, the same needs, the same faculties. The machine is the same in its construction; its parts, its working, and its appearance are similar. Regard it as you will the difference is only in degree. Yet where sex is concerned man and woman are unlike—”^{ix}

^{viii} *SD*, 143; 27.

^{ix} *E*, 692; 531.

LS: Let us stop here. This reminds somehow of the argument in Plato's *Republic*, doesn't it? That, apart from sex—well, Plato even disregards that, and says there is only a difference of degree between men and women, when he compares [them]. He says, well, there is a difference, but that is irrelevant; it is as irrelevant as the difference between men who are bald-headed and men who have full hair, which is a considerable exaggeration.^x Now, let us turn to 321, bottom.

Mr. Reinken: “These resemblances and differences must have an influence on the moral nature; this inference is obvious, and it is confirmed by experience; it shows the vanity of the disputes as to the superiority or the equality of the sexes; as if each sex, pursuing the path marked out for it by nature—”

LS: Literally, “going to the ends of nature, according to its particular destiny.”

Mr. Reinken: “—were not more perfect in that very divergence than if it more closely resembled the other. A perfect man and a perfect woman should no more be alike in mind than in face, and perfection admits of neither less nor more.”

LS: Now here you see the difference between Rousseau and Plato and Aristotle—especially Aristotle—very clearly. That a perfect woman must look and behave differently than a perfect man was a matter of course. But this does not mean that it is not possible to raise the question whether in principle the male sex is not superior to the female sex; and this indeed has something to do with the question of teleology to which one of you referred.

Student: Two paragraphs in here have this “more or less.” First is in the second paragraph of “Sophie,” where he says that men . . . In non-sexual matters there is a difference more or less; it's *only* a matter of more or less. He closes the other paragraph by saying perfection doesn't admit of this more or less. In short, in the non-sexual matters, woman, if she is less, could not be said to be perfect.

LS: Now, let me reread, see this once again. Each . . . [LS writes on the blackboard]. Now, there is an end . . . male; female. This is true in both cases. So, what he seems to say is this, if I understand him: that end is identical, but each approaches that end in a different way; and therefore, what follows from that? I mean, a woman who would walk on *that* way would be imperfect for that very reason; and vice versa. But . . . different but equal, is this not what it amounts to? Or do I misunderstand that?

Student: I don't understand that they have the same natural end.

LS: All right; then it is still simpler. If they have different natural ends—different natural ends—the question arises, which end is higher? And then Rousseau would seem to say neither is higher. So that is the way in which I understand that.

Student: Really you have to raise the questions about the place of reason, as compared with the classics.

^x *Republic* 454a-d.

LS: Yes; but let us proceed. As Eisenhower once said to General Patton, make your advance methodical and sure. Surely, that we have to take up.

Student: I have a question on this from my ignorance: what is the traditional view as contradistinct from this view?

LS: The traditional view, that is a long question. I mean, the—how shall I say?—the preponderant view of the sober people is of course that there is a [inaudible Latin term], a superiority of the males. And this went always together with the view—I address this to the ladies especially—that in quite a few cases, in a couple, the woman is superior to the man. But this is then a deplorable situation, you know, that the woman is more reasonable than the man; that cannot be helped. But the normal situation is that the man, being more reasonable, should be the guide to his woman. Aristotle compares it to a kind of quasi-aristocratic regime, you know, where the man is, as it were, the ruler for the time being, and the woman is not the ruler for the time being; say, the consul and the ordinary citizen for the time being.^{xi} And this was the view.

Now, the interesting case is, of course, Plato, because Plato deviates. Plato says, assuming you remember, the rulers should be women as well as men^{xii}; and not only the rulers, in all other professions. Now, may I say a word about it, because that has very much to do with the question we have in mind, and I wouldn't be surprised if Rousseau knew that, although he doesn't say so. When you look at Plato's doctrine, the philosopher-kings can be women as well as men, and if you look at it critically, i.e. using your head, looking at your experience, you make this observation: contrary to a very popular view—in former times a very popular view—there can be no question that women are very well capable of ruling societies; there have been many great rulers of the female sex. And, take another There is no reason why a woman should not be a first-rate businesswoman as men are businessmen. There are not so many, perhaps, but the principle is clear. Well, of course when you speak of political history, you bring always up controversial figures, but still, in the common estimate, Elizabeth was regarded as a great ruler—Elizabeth the First—and Catherine the Second, and some others whom I do not remember now. So, there are some famous . . . pardon? You have someone else?

Student: Maria-Theresa^{xiii} is the only queen who was a *woman* at the same time. She was a womanly queen, unique.

LS: Very well. Very maternal; sure, that is quite true; whereas

Student: [Inaudible] presupposed a traditional view

LS: No, no; that All right; at any rate, there is no reason to doubt whether there are very famous, very distinguished business women, and in politics to some extent. I have seen once Miss Perkins, and she was by far superior to many male politicians whom I have seen, I must say. But then make this experiment: turn from the history of kingdoms to the history of

^{xi} *Nicomachean Ethics*, 1160b33-35

^{xii} *Republic*, 540c

^{xiii} 1717-1780, the only female ruler of the Habsburg Empire.

philosophy. There is a very clear record in this respect, very clear—I mean, I say this with all deference to the ladies—among these thirty, forty, fifty men, human beings, there is not a single woman. I made this remark occasionally in a college in this country, and then the professor told me afterward—it was in his class—but what about Susan Stebbing, a countrywoman of yours? And then I said, I’m sorry; I had not thought of her. So, in other words, that is a fact; and I think Plato somehow knew that. The paradox of Plato’s *Republic* is not that he says “women can be rulers”; the paradox is that he says “they can be philosophers,” that is the paradox. And this will come up later in Rousseau; that’s the reason I make this remark. Now, we turn . . . forgive me: for 15 minutes, no discussion; otherwise will not cover our assignment. Page 322, paragraph 4.

Mr. Reinken: “If a woman is made to please and to be in subjection to man, she ought to make herself pleasing in his eyes and not provoke him to anger; her strength is in her charms, by their means she should compel him to discover and use his strength.”^{xiv}

LS: Let us stop here, perhaps. You see, Rousseau does not determine the relation; he admits here clearly a subordination of woman. But we will soon see that this must be qualified. At any rate he does not determine the relation of the sexes with a view to procreation, but to mere sexual union. But this is not quite true, as we see in the next paragraph.

Mr. Reinken: “Who can possibly suppose that nature has prescribed the same advances to the one sex as to the other, or that the first to feel desire should be the first to show it? What strange depravity of judgment! The consequences of the act being so different—”

LS: He calls it “the enterprise.” Yes, really: “*entreprise*.”

Mr. Reinken: “so different for the two sexes, is it natural that they should enter upon it with equal boldness? How can any one fail to see that when the share of each is so unequal, if the one were not controlled by modesty as the other is controlled by nature, the result would be the destruction of both, and the human race would perish through the very means ordained for its continuance.”^{xv}

LS: Let us stop here: You see, here he does refer to procreation, to the consequence of the sexual act; but only as consequences, not as the end. That is, I think, of crucial importance. Now, this somewhat obscure remark, how did you understand, Mr. Mueller, about the reserve is imposed on the one: “Reserve imposes on the one the moderation which nature imposes on the other.” Who is by nature moderate, and who needs reserve to be moderate?

Mr. Mueller: The woman is by nature moderate . . . Wait a minute; excuse me: the man is by nature moderate.

LS: Sure; that is clear. So, in other words, men are by nature moderate, and women are bashful by convention, that is the question that we see. That is what he says, yes. The difference . . . In the sequel he speaks of the difference between human and nonhuman females: the non-human

^{xiv} E, 693-94; 532.

^{xv} E, 694; 532-33.

females do not need sense of shame, because they have limited desires, and meaning that's the peculiarity of the human female. Now, let us turn to page 323.

Student: Excuse me: the translation has two omissions in this whole paragraph about the—^{xvi}

LS: Yes, and I don't believe it is due to prudery. I mean, we have such a clear case of her carelessness and so on here that I don't . . . I think this general vice of hers is a perfect explanation of any mistakes or omissions she makes.

Student: Well, I don't want to press the latter point . . .

LS: Sure; it would be a good subject for a Master's thesis.

Student: Freudian slips, and all that. I don't think it shows much more than that she is prudish. I am not interested in her beyond that. But she makes more slips about these delicate matters than she has elsewhere, when she mistranslates that passage of the . . . or misinterprets Rousseau's interpretation of [inaudible].

LS: Well, let us see. We cannot possibly . . . We would have to have a seminar *only* on the translation. Let us turn to the second half of paragraph 2 on page 323.

Mr. Reinken: "The freest and most delightful of activities does not permit of any real violence; reason and nature are alike against it; nature, in that she has given the weaker party strength enough to resist if she chooses; reason, in that actual violence is not only most brutal in itself, but it defeats its own ends, not only because the man thus declares war against his companion and thus gives her a right to defend her person and her liberty even at the cost of the enemy's life, but also because the woman alone is the judge of her condition, and a child would have no father if any man might usurp a father's rights."^{xvii}

LS: Yes, *this* is the context in which he speaks of this as the freest act. I mean, that's a very extreme statement to call this act the freest act, is it not? What does he mean by this mysterious statement at the end of the paragraph, if we begin at this point? She could say to the assailant that she is pregnant; and he could . . . not . . . He has no means of knowing better. But would this stop the brutal assailant? Well, we have read a lot about what the Russians did in Poland and in Germany in 1945—you know, the orgy—and surely they were not stopped by any consideration. Now, what does he mean? She alone is the judge of who is her children's father. I think what he has in mind here is the questionable character of paternity: strictly speaking, only the woman can know³ who the father is. I mean, of course it can be known indirectly by great resemblances; but that does not completely settle the issue, because there can be resembling potential fathers. But how far does it explain the other difficulty of this strange paragraph?

Student: Where do the father's rights come from?

^{xvi} Foxley left a couple of sentences out of the paragraph in question, one concerning "the ease with which women arouse men's senses"; however, as Strauss points out, this omission is one of several in the translation.

^{xvii} *E*, 695; 533-34.

LS: From the woman saying, this is the father.

Student: What follows? What rights does this give him?

LS: Well, within civil society, it is perfectly clear: that they are regarded as legitimate children. I mean, this is a very strange thing in ordinary usage: natural children are not legitimate children. No, this has something to do with the old question of *physis* and *nomos*, obviously. The natural children are children by nature; that means, of course, also the legitimate children may be by nature, but that is not necessarily the case. This was an old story; Xenophon, for example, when he speaks of the parents of Cyrus, he says, his mother was Mandane; his father was *said* to be—I have forgotten now his name.^{xviii} You know, this is simply an allusion to this problem; because the knowledge of the mother is more certain, is essentially certain, whereas the knowledge [of the father is not certain] because there can be witnesses to the act of birth: even witnesses to the sexual act could never establish anything, because the woman might be pregnant already. Excuse me if I am spelling it out so much, but it is—it seems rather clear; but nevertheless, the passage is not entirely clear to me. Mr. Seltzer.

Mr. Seltzer: It seems as though he is saying that in order for the act to be truly pleasing or satisfying, it requires the participation of both; otherwise it is not truly a sexual act. Somehow a corruption of the act, or . . . I don't know . . . But against that, it's accomplished by first, charms; then guile. The charms are natural; guile is one of these things like pride—it is not natural.

LS: We come to that point later; he gives a rather close analysis of that. Mr. Butterworth.

Mr Butterworth: Wasn't part of your question sort of around this point: Rousseau says that the woman alone is judge of the state in which she finds herself. Isn't this part of it? Could there be any allusion there to this legal question that is often debated in lawbooks as to what constitutes violation?

LS: Yes, it is also connected with that.

Mr. Butterworth: You don't think that's the main point?

LS: Well, that is an extremely delicate point. Of course, he also has this in mind. But regarding this question of paternity, I refer you to page 324, in the second half of the fourth paragraph, where he says, "She acts, the woman acts, as connection between the children and their father; she alone"

Mr. Reinken: "can win the father's love for his children and convince him that they are indeed his own."^{xix}

^{xviii} Xenophon, *The Education of Cyrus*, 1.2.1. The father is Cambyses.

^{xix} *E*, 697; 535.

LS: Yes, this is clearly the point. In other words, the paternal affection for children is necessarily mediated by the mother, because the mother alone can give him that certainty. That is the point which he makes here. Now, let us turn back to page 323, in the third paragraph.

Mr. Reinken: “Thus the different constitutions of the two sexes leads us to a third conclusion, that the stronger party seems to be master, but is as a matter of fact dependent on the weaker, and that, not by any foolish custom of gallantry, nor yet by the magnanimity of the protector, but by an inexorable law of nature. For nature has endowed woman with a power of stimulating man's passions in excess of man's power of satisfying those passions, and has thus made him dependent on her goodwill, and compelled him in his turn to endeavor to please her, so that she may be willing to yield to his superior strength. Is it weakness which yields to force, or is it voluntary self-surrender? This uncertainty constitutes the chief charm of the man's victory, and the woman is usually cunning enough to leave him in doubt. In this respect the woman's mind exactly resembles her body; far from being ashamed of her weakness, she is proud of it; her soft muscles offer no resistance, she professes that she cannot lift the lightest weight; she would be ashamed to be strong. And why? Not only to gain an appearance of refinement; she is too clever for that; she is providing herself beforehand with excuses, with the right to be weak if she chooses.”^{xx}

LS: Yes; now, women have unlimited desires, but not men; yet they can excite men's desire, and therefore they are stronger than men. On the other hand, the consequences of the sexual union are much graver for women than for men; women are weaker than men. This is a complicated relation: in one respect, the women are weaker—and not merely because their muscle power is smaller, but they suffer . . . the consequences are much graver. But on the other hand they have the superiority given by a greater power of desire. And from this he draws the conclusion in the next two paragraphs: the female being the most “sexy” is therefore the ruler. This is the natural situation. From this, of course, there follow unequal duties of the two sexes. We might perhaps read page 325, paragraph 2.

Mr. Reinken: “Thus it is not enough that a wife should be faithful; her husband, along with his friends and neighbors, must believe in her fidelity; she must be modest, devoted, retiring; she should have the witness not only of a good conscience, but of a good reputation. In a word, if a father must love his children, he must be able to respect their mother.”^{xxi}

LS: Yes. There is a good example to the contrary in *Pride and Prejudice*: Mr. Bennett does not esteem his wife, and in a way, surely he loves one of his children.^{xxii} At any rate, the key point, and it is decisive through the rest of the argument: woman in contradistinction to man must be concerned with what the other people think of her. A man, a free man, does not have to be concerned with what other men think of him; but the very best of women is not best if she is not *thought* to be chaste. Now, let us turn to page 325, in the third paragraph.

^{xx} E, 695-96; 534.

^{xxi} E, 698; 536.

^{xxii} However, Rousseau seems to mean “respect” in a limited sense here; Mrs. Bennett does not have a reputation for infidelity, and women, like Lydia, who do have a reputation even for looseness, avoid disaster only through good fortune.

Mr. Reinken: “It is a poor sort of logic to quote isolated exceptions against laws so firmly established. Women, you say, are not always bearing children. Granted; yet that is their proper business. Because there are a hundred or so of large towns in the world where women live licentiously and have few children, will you maintain that it is their business to have few children?”^{xxiii}

LS: Let us stop here. So, the natural function of women becomes important⁴ because women alone can vouch for the legitimacy of the children. And this is, of course, absolutely decisive in civil society. I mean, this is also an old question: Aristotle discusses in the *Politics* the case of a horse which was called—a female horse—which was called “the honest one,” or “the just one,” because she produced children reproducing the very image of the stallion, you know, so one was sure that [the stallion was the father].^{xxiv} After all, there is the possibility that the children born do *not* resemble the father, and the mother can be perfectly good, but 100 percent goodness is supplied only when there is close resemblance.

Student: [Inaudible] bring this little irrelevancy into this: among the various animals, there is quite a bit of variation. The fox will once choose a female fox, and once he does that he will never leave her, no matter what; he is completely faithful. On the other hand, as you know, in some other species this faithfulness does not last beyond the [act] or is not normal.

LS: Yes; and how far does it affect the issue?

Student: I mean, just thinking of the whole concept of the natural faithfulness question.

LS: I see. But I think, is not the ordinary traditional example given, taken from pigeons, of great conjugal fidelity?

Student: Swans.

LS: Swans; I see.

Student: Doesn't this affect the *Second Discourse*, that note, and Locke?

LS: Which one? You mean when Locke says that in the case of men a more firm and lasting connection is needed than in the case of the animals; do you mean that?

Student: Locke reasoning on this same type of thing, the animals that do stay with . . . he says that there is a natural tendency for man to stay with woman until she at least gives birth to a child. Rousseau point by point destroys that.^{xxv}

LS: I see; in other words, so that man does not have this natural inclination of the foxes of Mr. Boyan . . .

^{xxiii} *E*, 698; 536.

^{xxiv} *Politics*, 1262a24.

^{xxv} *SD*, 214-18; 86-90.

[Inaudible exchange]

LS: I see. So, let us leave it at that, and let us come now to his explicit critique of Plato's *Republic* on page 320, paragraph 3.

Student: May I ask a small question? Whether there is any significance—we are getting past it—why on the top of page 323 he suddenly refers to the deity; if there any special significance to that?^{xxvi}

LS: Now, let me I must identify this here. Oh, he says “the supreme Being,” yes? I do not know; but let me say—*règle générale*—that Rousseau uses very often theological expressions. The whole book is shot through from the very beginning, and But the question is, these references to the supreme being have to be understood in the light of the thematic discussion, and not vice versa; because the supreme being can have *n* meanings, and you can find out the precise meaning only on the basis of the explicit discussion. Now, page 326, paragraph 3.

Mr. Reinken: “I am quite aware that Plato, in the *Republic*, assigns the same gymnastics to women and men.”

LS: May I say that he doesn't say “I am quite aware.” But that just in passing.^{xxvii}

Mr. Reinken: Oh, simply: “Plato gives the same exercise to women as to men; I believe it as well.”

LS: Yes.

Mr. Reinken: I'll have to use the translation.

LS: Yes.

Mr. Reinken: “Having got rid of the family there is no place for women in his system of government, so he is forced to turn them into men. That great genius has worked out his plans in detail and has provided for every contingency; he has even provided against a difficulty which in all likelihood no one would ever have raised; but he has not succeeded in meeting the real difficulty. I am not speaking of the alleged community of wives which has often been laid to his charge; this assertion only shows that his detractors have never read his works. I refer to that political promiscuity under which the same occupations are assigned to both sexes alike, a scheme which could only lead to intolerable evils; I refer to that subversion of all the tenderest of our natural feelings, which he sacrificed to an artificial sentiment which can only exist by their aid. Will the bonds of convention hold firm without some foundation in nature? Can devotion to the state exist apart from the love of those near and dear to us? Can patriotism thrive except in the soil of that miniature fatherland, the home? Is it not the good son, the good husband, the good father, who makes the good citizen?”^{xxviii}

^{xxvi} E, 695; 533.

^{xxvii} He says: “Je le crois bien!” or “I can well believe it!”

^{xxviii} E, 699-700; 537.

LS: Yes. Now, I think what Rousseau says is clear. Plato of course does not promote promiscuity, as some fools might say who haven't read Plato; but the thing is graver. What Rousseau says is there is no city, no civil society, without family, and no family without sexual love. Rousseau sees very clearly, incidentally, the anti-erotic character of the *Republic* as a whole. But sexual love is of course not simply natural, according to Rousseau—that is the difficulty—and the city, naturally, still less. The conclusion on page 326 in the fourth paragraph; read the next paragraph.

Mr. Reinken: “When once it is proved that men and women are and ought to be unlike in constitution and in temperament, it follows that their education must be different. Nature teaches us that they should work together, but that each has its own share of the work; the end is the same, but the means are different, as are also^{xxix} the feelings which direct them.”

LS: “the tastes.” Go on.

Mr. Reinken: “We have attempted to paint a natural man, let us try to paint a helpmeet for him.”^{xxx}

LS: That's all we need. “After having tried to form the natural man, in order not to leave our work imperfect, let us see how the woman *convenient*^{xxxi} to that man must be formed”: he does not say the natural woman; that is surely intentional. Woman cannot be natural in the way in which man is by nature, natural. Now, what does that mean? What was the net result of our observations regarding the natural character of Emile's education? In what sense is his education natural? We have seen it is terribly artificial; but in one sense it is natural.

Student: In prejudices.

LS: No prejudices. The woman without prejudices is not even desirable, and not even possible. And the principle is stated very clearly at the bottom of page 327.

Student: “When I consider the special purpose of women, when I observe her inclinations or reckon up her duties, everything combines to indicate the mode of education she requires. Men and women are made for each other, but their mutual dependence differs in degree—”

LS: “is not equal.”

Mr. Reinken: “man is dependent through his desires; woman is dependent on man through her desires and also through her needs; he could do without her better than she can do without him. She cannot fulfill her purpose in life—”

^{xxix} As are “consequently.”

^{xxx} Foxley truncates the passage. Strauss restores what she has left out in his next comment.

^{xxxi} Or “suitable.” *E*, 700; 538.

LS: Incidentally, this sentence—I am sorry—you see here the distinction he makes between desire and need. Sex is a desire but not a need. And by the way, that confirms perfectly what we have found in the earlier passages—I will make a reference to that. Go on, please.

Mr. Reinken: “She cannot fulfill her purpose in life without his aid, without his goodwill, without his respect; she is dependent on our feelings, on the price we put upon her virtue, and the opinion we have of her charms and her deserts.”^{xxxii}

END OF TAPE SIDE ONE

Mr. Reinken: “Nature herself has decreed that woman, both for herself and her children, should be at the mercy of man’s judgment.”^{xxxiii}

LS: “Of men’s judgment.” And read us the last sentence of that paragraph: “Opinion is the grave of virtue among men; and her throne among women,”^{xxxiv} i.e. a man who depends on what the others say about him, he can no longer be a virtuous man; he is completely other—how do they say it?—other-oriented?

Student: Other-directed.

LS: Other-directed, and therefore he cannot be self-directed; he cannot be virtuous. But the woman *must* be other-directed; and therefore her education must be radically conventional. This is clear. Now, let us turn to page 330, paragraph 4.

Mr. Reinken: “I will not venture upon the reasons which induce women to incase themselves in these coats of mail. A clumsy figure, a large waist, are no doubt very ugly at twenty, but at thirty they cease to offend the eye, and as we are bound to be what nature has made us at any given age, and as there is no deceiving the eye of man, such defects are less offensive at any age than the foolish affectations of a young thing of forty.”^{xxxv}

LS: Yes; I thought this would be of interest because of the changed figures—I mean numbers. I mean, perhaps one can say today an eighty year old grandmother, or grand-grandmother, looks in her dresses like a ten year old girl, is this not . . . or am I totally mistaken? No. This is interesting for the understanding of democracy: democracy means of course equality, naturally. But this equality does not go with its particular kind of inequality: there is a preferred stage. Now, in the case of women’s dresses I believe that is particularly clearly recognizable—well, I will be corrected if anyone, especially the ladies, say I got my facts wrong; they are based on a very superficial study of these matters—but I have the feeling that there is a certain preferred age, let me say twenty-two. And every . . . I mean, most women who are in the thrall of these fashions all would like to look like a girl of twenty-two, whether they are fifteen or eighty-five doesn’t make any difference. In the case of men it is more complicated—that is interesting—because there are two preferred types, the junior executive, as one may say, and the senior executive, and

^{xxxii} E, 702; 538. Surprisingly, Foxley translates “*vertus*” as “deserts” and “*mérite*” as “virtue.”

^{xxxiii} E, 702; 538.

^{xxxiv} E, 702-3; 540.

^{xxxv} E, 706; 542.

it is very hard to say which is preferable. You know, the grey hair here, and so, gives a man a kind of distinction which the junior executive would not have, and vice versa. Now, so, that is the way in which nature preserves itself *in* the fashions. And this is At any rate, the age terms given here differ very greatly. I mean, I don't believe that any woman today would say at thirty years she may no longer be concerned with her figure. At least, that is But I must admit that my observation is almost exclusively based on what I see over the TV, and that is not the best source, naturally. Now, we must, of course, concentrate on the key passages, so we have . . . the principle, however, is clear. Opinion, female opinion, must be guided by [the] opinion [of others]—the female education must be guided by opinion; the man's education must not be guided by opinion. And what will be the crucial application of this general principle? We know this now *a priori*, after having learned something. What is it?

Student: Religion.

LS: Absolutely. So, the girl will have religious education—as a young girl—whereas Emile had none. Now, let us first turn to page 337, in the third paragraph.

Mr. Reinken: “Pleasant accomplishments have been made too formal an affair of rules and precepts, so that young people find them very tedious instead of a mere amusement or a merry game as they ought to be. Nothing can be more absurd than an elderly singing or dancing master frowning upon young people, whose one desire is to laugh—”^{xxxvi}

LS: That is not what I had in mind. I had in mind the paragraph beginning, “But is the necessity of this change.”

Mr. Reinken: “But is this change in itself really necessary? Is it not merely another result of our own prejudices? By making good women the slaves of dismal duties, we have deprived marriage of its charm for men. Can we wonder that the gloomy silence they find at home drives them elsewhere, or inspires little desire to enter a state which offers so few attractions? Christianity, by exaggerating every duty, has made our duties impracticable and useless; by forbidding singing, dancing, and amusements of every kind, it renders women sulky, fault-finding, and intolerable at home. There is no religion which imposes such strict duties upon married life, and none in which such a sacred engagement is so often profaned. Such pains have been taken to prevent wives being amiable, that their husbands have become indifferent to them. This should not be, I grant you, but it will be, since husbands are but men. I would have an English maiden cultivate the talents which will delight her husband as zealously as the Circassian cultivates the accomplishments of an Eastern harem.”^{xxxvii}

LS: Let us stop here. I think that is also interesting for the changes in general morality which have occurred. But it is also interesting for another reason: here is an open criticism of Christianity, and not of a perverted form of Christianity, do you see that? And why does he just mention an English woman? After all, they are Pardon? No, at that time this was different. He speaks of the immorality of London with the same emphasis as of the immorality of Paris.

^{xxxvi} *E*, 717; 551. Foxley leaves out a chunk of this passage.

^{xxxvii} *E*, 716; 550-51.

So, I mean, whatever the high moral reputation of your country, Mr. Morrison, has become in the nineteenth century, that was not in all centuries, as you surely know. Pardon?

Student: The reputation was not different in any time.

LS: Well, it was not the same in the Restoration as it was

Student: It shocked Casanova.

Student: It shocked living Americans.

LS: What? Whom did it shock?

Student: Billy Graham.

LS: Oh, I see; even today. But not In the nineteenth century I think Britain was most famous for⁵ [its] severe morality, but that was not But why does he refer to the English woman? I think for a very simple reason: he wants to make clear that this is not merely directed against ascetic Catholicism, but against Protestantism as well. That, I think, is the simple reason.

Student: [Inaudible] Calvinism.

LS: Yes, but you see, Calvinism is only a part of England.

Student: No, I meant in Geneva.

LS: Oh, I see. Oh, that is good; that is very sound: he didn't wish to speak In other words, the English woman stands for a Genevan woman; that is very possible. Mr. Nicgorski.

Mr. Nicgorski: I was wondering how ascetic was Catholicism at that time, in general society, I mean, outside the convents. Perhaps mainly it was directed at Calvinism.

LS: Yes, but then he would say this, since the severe notion of the indissolubility of marriage, and the fact that celibacy is regarded in itself as a higher status than marriage, this leads, indirectly, to immorality. This is probably what he would say. But I am only interested here in the fact that here is an open criticism of Christian morality as such; whether justified or not is not the point here. Now, let us turn to page 340, paragraph 2.

Mr. Reinken: "If boys are incapable of forming any true idea of religion, much more is it beyond the grasp of girls; and for this reason I would speak of it all the sooner to little girls, for if we wait till they are ready for a serious discussion of these deep subjects we should be in danger of never speaking of religion at all. A woman's reason is practical, and therefore she soon arrives at a given conclusion, but she fails to discover it for herself."

LS: No, that is not correct enough: “*The reason of women is a practical reason, which makes them find very ably the means for arriving at an end,*^{xxxviii} but which does not permit her to find that end.” And this is of course practical reason, not to establish ends, but to find the means for an end.

Mr. Reinken: “The social relation of the sexes is a wonderful thing. This relation produces a moral person of which woman is the eye and man the hand—”

LS: He uses “moral person” here in the juridical sense: a corporate body, the marriage.

Mr. Reinken: “but the two are so dependent on one another that the man teaches the woman what to see, while she teaches him what to do. If women could discover principles and if men had as good heads for detail, they would be mutually independent, they would live in perpetual strife, and there would be an end to all society.^{xxxix} But in their mutual harmony each contributes to a common purpose; each follows the other's lead, each commands and each obeys.”^{xl}

LS: Yes; so, this is, of course, a more concrete statement of what he said about the equality of the two sexes, you know: that they are different, but there is no superiority or inferiority; this he seems to say. But the point is of course here, the girls must get a religious education, spiritual. Woman's mind is practical rather than theoretical. Now, this was not the traditional view. That was *not* the traditional view; I mean, the position of the woman is enhanced in Rousseau. That women have a better practical mind than men—the famous woman's intuition, as it is ordinarily called—that was not the traditional view; although I believe people knew the phenomenon. What was the traditional view regarding the differences of the two sexes, intellectually?

Student: Regarding prudence, prudence was the virtue of the gentlemen.

LS: But you must emphasize *man*.

Student: Gentleman. That's what I mean.

LS: Well, what about women? I mean, in the normal cases.

Student: Women took care of the household.

LS: Yes, sure.

Student: But only in a subordinate—

LS: Domestically; distribution rather than acquisition. Yes, but fundamentally this: what's the difference between women and children, the relative ineptitude—I am repeating Aristotle's teaching; I do not express any views of my own. Now, what is the difference between female and infantile ineptitude, according to the traditional view? Very simple. A child really is unable to be

^{xxxviii} At a “known” end.

^{xxxix} The society between men and women, that is.

^{xl} *E*, 720; 554.

prudent, lacking experience; and no one would ask a child for a counsel in a difficult case, whereas one might ask a very gifted boy for a solution to a mathematical problem if he is more gifted than oneself—but not in any practical point. So, the children simply lack prudence. Women, grown up women, do not lack prudence as such; but the power of the passions is too strong so that they would act ordinarily on the prudence. I mean, in other words, there is a difference of degree. Men—men's passions—were assumed to be—man was assumed to be better able to control the passions. And the passions did not mean here sexual passions in particular. There are some very simple cases: I mean, I think you will find very rarely that a man falls in love with a certain tie, that he *must* buy it. But you find frequently women who fall in love, say, with a certain hat—not all, but more frequently, I believe—so that this hat takes on an inordinate importance, which . . . Of course, she would see naturally with her prudence that the hat is not very important, but the attachment, the passionate attachment to the hat overrides prudence as far as the action is concerned. That, roughly, was the traditional view.

Student: Could it be said then that women would always be subject to blushing, whereas a man, once he grows up, should not be?

LS: Well, that is, as they say, an empirical question.

Student: I mean from Aristotle's point of view.

LS: That they are subject . . . yes, sure. I see: she *should* be. Yes, because she must make mistakes; that's true. So, the perfect woman, perfect gentlewoman, would blush; the perfect gentleman would not blush. That's good, what you say. That must be the consequence of that presupposition.

Student: Earlier Rousseau remarks on the facial resemblances between grown women and children, and says that in a certain sense it seems that women remain children all their lives.^{xli}

LS: Yes, that has frequently been said before. That's one way of putting it. I mean, this is exactly something like the doll, the attachment to *this* particular hat. Now, let us see; we must now proceed somewhat faster. We come now to that note belonging to page 343, to which Mr. Mueller referred, and that is in the context of the religious education of the girl. Read that note; do you have it?

[Note missing in the translation; translated by the reader]

Mr. Reinken: "The idea of eternity would not be able to be applied to the human generation^{xlii} with the consentment of minds.^{xliii} Every numerical succession, reduced to an act, is incompatible with this idea."^{xliv}

^{xli} E, 489; 361.

^{xlii} "human generations."

^{xliii} "with the consent of the mind."

^{xliv} E, 728; 558.

LS: In other words, as distinguished from a mere potential. So, what does this mean, this hard sentence? I am not quite sure whether I understand it.

Student: I'm not sure, either, but numerical succession, the generations of men are obviously numerical succession.

LS: He doesn't say that the idea of eternity is in itself impossible.

Student: No.

LS: But in its application to the human generations.

Student: One simply cannot think that man You cannot imagine infinity of man going backwards in time.

LS: Yes; in both ways, both ways it would be. No, I think the net result is clearly the human race is finite both backward and forward. This, I believe, is the net result. But why he states it in such a complicated matter, I do not know.

Student: He said it once in a very simple manner: the girl would be taught that there are parents which had no parents, and there are children which will have no children.^{xlv}

LS: Yes, but you see, primarily the notion of a parentless human being is impossible.

Student: I think so, and [inaudible].

LS: Yes, that is, of course, the famous strength of Aristotle, that he said there cannot be a first man.^{xlvi} Whereas both the Biblical teaching *and* evolutionism say there is—and of course also Epicureans—say there was a first man or first men. Rousseau denies that, too, by saying, for reasons which he does not give here, “it is impossible that there should not be a first man; there must be a first man.”

Student: Well, my feeling was—my feeling, not my conclusion—was that this is not clear to me; it is not clear that he's saying that. Obviously the generations of men are an actuality which you have. I don't see how you can conclude anything about them—and I feel Rousseau must have realized this simple point—but I find an idea of eternity⁶ [of] them, even granted the Christian parallel. . . .

LS: Well, the argument he doesn't give. He does not say an actual infinity is impossible; he does not say that. He says an actual infinity is impossible regarding the generations of men.

Student: And the idea of eternity confirms it, but I see—contradicts it; excuse me—but I see no contradiction.

^{xlv} *E*, 727-28; 558.

^{xlvi} Aristotle refers to the infinity of human generations at *Physics* 206a25-27 and arguably asserts that every species, including the human species is eternal (see e.g. *Generation of Animals*, 731b24-732a1).

LS: Yes, but he . . . obviously the argument is not given. He had some reasons, not developed here, why he regarded it as impossible that the human race is infinite backward and forward.

Student: But the reason would have to be very powerful reasons or ideas.

LS: No, not in itself.

Student: There would have to be a powerful argument if the mere idea of eternity which is given could contradict—

LS: Yes, but that he doesn't say.

Student: The fact, the actuality of the generations.

LS: Yes, but it is a very awkward expression. But the net result is—to repeat—Rousseau does not deny that there can be an actual infinity. He denies only there can be an actual infinity of the human race; that's all that is relevant and clear; and nothing else is clear.

Student: I found out . . . I mean, that the actual sequence of human beings as parents and children is given, and . . .

LS: But not as an infinity.

Student: No, not as an infinity; no, I didn't mean that, certainly not. It's just given; and I don't see how any idea can—

LS: Yes, but that he doesn't develop. You have here the idea of infinity. Then you have an idea of *X*, which he doesn't state. And he says the idea of infinity does not jibe with that *X*. But what that *X* is, he doesn't say.

Student: One thing I don't understand about your explanation that in the note there's two different ideas; and you bring them together by a step that I don't see. The first sentence is an idea of eternity, and the second sentence is an idea of infinity. And I don't see how you bring the two of them together.

LS: That coincides here, because the human race cannot be eternal if the successions of generations both ways is not infinite; that, I think, is the simple connection. But we must go on. On page 343, bottom, and the next page, this is too long to read, but this is *extremely* important with the whole work. Rousseau presents here his *own* profession of faith; and it is in substance identical with the Profession of Faith of the Vicar. So this, I think, is a strong argument in favor of the view which I reject, at least at first glance. But we must also say he presents this, his own profession of faith, within the context of the religious education of *girls*. I mean, this is a qualifying element.^{xlvii}

^{xlvii} *E*, 728-29; 558-59.

Student: But there is this sentence, he says: “Children need to be taught these doctrines and others like them and all citizens require to be persuaded of their truth.”^{xlvi}

LS: Yes, very good; that is extremely good. In other words, it becomes clear from the context that—although not explicitly stated as the civil religion—“the human society,” “the citizens,” “the species,” “the human species,” and other expressions require these dogmas.

Student: And it seems as though, identically with Book 4, it is surrounded by two other moralities that precede and follow it regarding the education of girls—

LS: That I did not see.

Student: [Moralities] that have to do with duty not resting on religion, but resting on pleasure.

LS: Yes, that comes in; that’s a bit more complicated. We come to that later. Now, let us turn to page 345, at the end of the first, and the beginning of the second paragraph: “Finally the moment comes”

Mr. Reinken: “when they begin to judge things for themselves, and that is the time to change your method of education. Perhaps I have said too much already. To what shall we reduce the education^{xlix} of our women if we give them no law but that of conventional prejudice?”

LS: “public prejudices,” public prejudices; because these Go on now.

Mr. Reinken: “Let us not degrade so far the sex which rules over us, and which does us honor when we have not made it vile. For all mankind there is a law anterior to that of public opinion.”

LS: “A rule.” Let us be literal: “a rule anterior to opinion.”

Mr. Reinken: “All other laws should bend before the inflexible control of this law; it is the judge of public opinion—”

LS: No: “it judges even prejudice.”

Mr. Reinken: “even prejudice, and only insofar as the esteem of men is in accordance with this law has it any claim on our obedience. This law is our individual conscience.”^l

LS: “This rule is the inner sentiment.” And he says here he will not repeat what he has said before. Now, then, that is the question. The public prejudices need a rule by which to be judged. We may say, as Mr. Seltzer implied, that rule is morality. Rousseau says here the rule is the interior sentiment. What does this mean? Does he refer to the Vicar’s Profession? He refers to “what has been said before,” and not to “what I have said before,” in paragraph three on the same

^{xlvi} *E*, 729; 559.

^{xlix} Foxley adds “the education” Rousseau says “To what will we reduce women?”

^l *E*, 730; 560.

page.^{li} Does he mean the commandments to love God and to love one's neighbor, or what does he mean by these two rules?^{lii} Let us read the next paragraph.

Mr. Reinken: "It is, therefore, important to cultivate a faculty which serves as judge between the two guides—"

LS: Yes, you see: "between the two guides": whatever the guides may be, we need an arbiter, which cannot be identical with one of the two guides being the other's guide.

Mr. Reinken: "which does not permit conscience to go astray and corrects the errors of prejudice."

LS: So, both are insufficient guides, both the prejudice and the conscience.

Mr. Reinken: "That faculty is reason."^{liii}

LS: Yes; and now the difficulty that, how can you make women reasonable, that is the difficulty which he raises here. So, the two rules which he has in mind are clearly stated: conscience and prejudice. On page 346 in the second paragraph, he says the two rules are conscience and the opinions of others. Now this statement which we read is very different. Does he mean we must deviate from conscience in the direction of prejudice sometimes, and this deviation is to be established by reason? Consider the conduct of the Vicar regarding religion: the Catholic priest believing in the superiority of Protestantism. What does he This judgment is guided by reason, it seems. Let us turn to page 346 in the third paragraph, where things will become a little clearer.

Mr. Reinken: "I always come back to my first^{liv} principle and it supplies the solution of all my difficulties. I study what is, I seek its cause, and I discover in the end that what is, is good."^{lv}

LS: Period. That is a very strange statement. This is not said at random; that will be taken up. I mean, everything that is—he doesn't say here everything, but he means it—everything that is, is good. This was popularized at that time by Pope in his essay, I think, in the *Essay on Man* [1734]: whatever is, is good; and of course, Leibniz—optimism—plays a great role. And in this connection Rousseau in a way says this, too, but in the context he clearly means whatever is in *society* is good, is also good. And this surely contradicts everything else, unless one would Now, if you would read the argument when he describes in the sequel a man and a woman and society, with⁷ [what] perfection they guide their guests, and everything is—in other words, *social* men are perfectly [good].^{lvi} Where everything is in order, it is good there.

^{li} E, 730; 560.

^{lii} As Strauss is about to note, the two rules, are opinion and the inner sentiment, or prejudice and conscience.

^{liii} E, 730; 560.

^{liv} Foxley adds this "first."

^{lv} E, 732; 561.

^{lvi} E, 732-33; 561-62.

Student: That reminds me of something he said. At the end of their little party—well, it is before the end—they end their party and talk to one another about what is going on; and he observes, for no reason at all that I can see, except to make fun of this [woman], that she has still managed to eat more than anybody else.

LS: But this shows her perfect command, that she can control everything. No, that is, I think this is simply meant to show how perfectly she is in command of the situation, since she can eat more than everyone else although she is active and attentive more than anyone else.

Student: It is also guileful, because nobody notices that. Everybody thinks she is busy so she must not have been able

LS: Yes, sure; that shows only her perfect control of the situation.

Student: Her gourmandise is a

LS: That I do not believe. I think the overall context of this is what we must never forget. At the beginning we saw the conflict between man and citizen; and we have seen already in the case of Emile that a certain reconciliation of this conflict had been achieved. Now, if it is possible to achieve this reconciliation also regarding woman, the she-citizen and the she-woman, then everything is perfect, of course; everything is good. The argument naturally goes on; we cannot read everything; we cannot read this, unfortunately. Read here a little bit, somewhat later; after the Italian quotation from Tasso—do you see that Italian quotation two pages later—the second paragraph after it.

Mr. Reinken: “This is what is, and we have seen why it is so.”^{lvii}

LS: “why it must be so,” “*cela doit être*,” why it ought to be so. What is, is good; you see, Rousseau doesn’t drop this subject in any way. And let us turn, let us read in this paragraph, after three lines: “The mouth never says—”

Mr. Reinken: “The lips always say ‘No,’ and rightly so; but the tone is not always the same—”

LS: Which she puts in it. Yes.

Mr. Reinken: “and that cannot lie. Has not a woman the same needs as a man, but without the same right to make them known? Her fate would be too cruel if she had no language in which to express her legitimate desires except the words which she dare not utter. Must her modesty condemn her to misery? Does she not require a means of indicating her inclinations without open expression? What skill is needed to hide from her lover what she would fain reveal! Is it not of vital importance that she should learn to touch his heart without showing that she cares for him? It is a pretty story that tale of Galatea with her apple and her clumsy flight. What more is needed? Will she tell the shepherd who pursues her among the willows that she only flees that he may follow? If she did, it would be a lie; for she would no longer attract him. The more modest a

^{lvii} E, 734; 563.

woman is, the more art she needs, even with her husband. Yes, I maintain that coquetry, kept within bounds, becomes modest and true, and out of it springs a law of right conduct.”^{lviii}

LS: “of decency.” You see, that is rather subtle, how he expresses it: sense of shame, denying what is, fictitious identification of what is with what is good, brings about, in a manner, the true identity of what is with what is good. That is the meaning of this discourse on female conduct.

Student: Doesn’t Milton say something like that?

LS: I do not know. We must here follow the point. In the next paragraph, he says, in the middle of the paragraph: “The moral truth is not what is, but what is good. What is bad should not be, and must not be avowed.”^{lix} So, in other words, that the non-avowed—the identification of the non-avowed with the non-existent, that is exactly the point. This is, I think, what . . . when we read the next [sentences], in the same paragraph, the end of that.

Mr. Reinken: “Are those who lose their modesty more sincere than the rest?”

LS: No:^{lx} “On the contrary, those who still have shame, who are not proud of their mistakes, who know how to conceal their desires. . . .”

Mr. Reinken: “even from those who inspire them, those who confess their passion most reluctantly, these are the truest and most sincere, these are they on whose fidelity you may generally rely.”^{lxi}

LS: Do you see: the truest or sincerest are those who in a certain sense are the least sincere, that is the point—no, let me first finish that, because that, I think, is a strict parallel to what he says about the Vicar. You remember, we had a similar remark of the Vicar: adhere sincerely to the religion in which you are brought up—and this was in a way, of course, very insincere—and adhere sincerely to the religion in which you are born, of which you know that it is not true. There is a strict parallel in sexual conduct as in religious conduct. Incidentally, this sentence “what is, is good,” is explicitly made by the Vicar, as you can see on page 245 in the translation.^{lxii} Now, Mr. Boyan.

Mr. Boyan: [Inaudible: to the effect that he didn’t catch the turn of the argument in the previous paragraphs].

LS: Rousseau says very paradoxically: everything that is, is good. It is a riddle; how can he say that? Now, he says it in this special context, where he means everything in society, among properly brought up people, is as it should be; in society. But we learn all the time society has

^{lviii} *E*, 734-35; 563-64.

^{lix} *E*, 735; 564.

^{lx} This “no” is not a complaint about the translation (though one could complain that Foxley has left something out—Rousseau refers to those who lose their modesty “most completely,” not just to those who lose their modesty) but an indication that the reader started on the wrong sentence.

^{lxi} *E*, 735; 564.

^{lxii} *E*, 588; 544.

fundamental flaws. How, how is this coincidence of the is and the ought brought about? We see in this case of the woman: it is brought about by her bashfulness, by her sense of shame, by her not avowing what is, her desires. So, the reconciliation of is and ought is brought about by concealment, by a *noble* concealment, without any question, but by concealment. Therefore, there is not in simple truth identity of the is and the ought. And similar considerations apply to religion. Mr. Reinken.

Mr. Reinken: Immediately after the paragraph where he talks about the virtue of the woman being in her concealment of a matter of truth, he says that “one of my opponents has very truly asserted that virtue is one”^{lxiii} which implies that this characterization of virtue can—is inviting you to extend this characterization of virtue from the woman to other virtues.

LS: Yes, but how is this unity to be achieved? Did his opponent understand the unity of virtue as Rousseau did? That’s the point. In other words, one can say, as his opponent says, virtue is one. But the question is, what does this mean? And here we see that moral truth is not what is, but what is good. What is bad ought not to be, and must not be avowed, especially when this avowal gives it an effect which it would not have without this. That is, I mean, if one would use harsh and offensive terms, a recommendation of hypocrisy; because, by denying the existence of desires you *do* contribute to your control of desires in yourself and others, but theoretically it is wrong to say that the woman doesn’t have the desire. Theoretically it is wrong, because she has these desires. But by denying it, she acts more decently than by admitting that. I mean, look at it in practical terms: if a woman were compelled to be absolutely honest in this sense, and if someone makes her an improper proposal, she would say, I must say I have a certain desire to accept your offer, but I control it. It is, of course, much simpler and better for both, if she is compelled to make any pronouncement on the subject, to say I have no desire whatever. Is that not clear? And nevertheless it is not Only this is, how shall I say, an almost fantastic case. But what Rousseau claims, that this fantastic case is somehow involved in female conduct in general; that a woman must not under any circumstances [openly avow her desire] and this brings about—the identity of is and ought is brought about by—a fictitious identification of [the true and the good, or the insistence that] the non-avowed does not exist. I think everyone sees that the non-avowed does not as such not exist.

Now, let us see: on page 349 in the last paragraph, which is very long—we cannot read that; it is too long.^{lxiv} But the main point which Rousseau makes can be stated as follows: *the* truth will not become known without the contribution by women; women see certain very important things which men do not see. And this is, of course, also non-traditional, and is part of the boosting—if I may use this vulgar term—of the female sex which Rousseau achieves, corresponding to his boosting of⁸ childhood—same principle. I mean, there is no end, no natural end—say, no human type which is *the* perfect type. Following from that is the equality of the ages, and also the equality of the sexes; and the connection with the generally democratic doctrine is clear to the meanest capacities, as John Locke⁹ would express that.

Student: This is the paragraph beginning, “The search for abstract and speculative truths—”

^{lxiii} E. 764; 564.

^{lxiv} E. 736-37; 565-66.

LS: Yes.

Student: “for principles and axioms in science”?

LS: Yes. Here he agrees with the tradition: a woman cannot be a philosopher, strictly speaking. This is the paragraph to which I referred.

Student: Well, I must say, beyond their inspiring men to something or other, to actions, because they observe better as a consequence of their

LS: Let me see: you think I exaggerate. Now, let me see. Yes, I think that is true: he says, “Men will philosophize better than women on the human heart; but women will read better than they in the hearts of men.”^{lxv}

Student: I took it to mean [inaudible], in part simply because . . . well, from this better reading, they will inspire men with actions. They are partly able to read better than men because they have this acuteness of observation [inaudible] almost on the defensive, as he puts it here.

LS: Yes, but I am only concerned with the main point now; and please read on page 353, in the second paragraph.

Mr. Reinken: “These external signs are not devoid of meaning; they do not rest entirely upon the charms of sense; they arise from that conviction that we all feel that women are the natural judges of a man’s worth.”^{lxvi}

LS: Well, please! Would Plutarch have said that? I mean, there are certain complications caused by the gossip of Athens about the contribution of Aspasia to Pericles’ speeches, that I know; but this was still . . . you know, that had to do with the woman ruler and¹⁰ business woman of which I spoke before; that has nothing to do whatever with [women in general]. But this passage, I would say, shows clearly that woman comes off much better in Rousseau than she does in Aristotle, and in the tradition.

Student: What about the fact that she, the little girl begins to babble more charmingly than the little boy? The little boy is dull, and she is already clever.^{lxvii}

LS: Oh, that is undeniable; they are more precocious without any

Student: The talent of speaking is especially appropriate to them.

LS: Yes, a certain insinuating way of speaking has been—I know only the literature—has frequently been said to be characteristic of the female sex. It has often been said that they can be more persuasive than men, frequently. But I think the problem is solved very simply, namely, a

^{lxv} E, 737; 566.

^{lxvi} E, 742; 569.

^{lxvii} E, 718; 552-53.

little bit later on in this paragraph No, the paragraph after the one at which we looked, near the beginning, when he speaks of the Spartan and German and Roman women. He says: “all the peoples who have had manners have respected their women.”^{lxviii} In other words, the context of this has to do with the political or social, as distinguished from the theoretical context; and there, from that point of view, of course, it is perfectly natural. May I restate my argument again; I mean, on the basis of the way in which I understand Plato and Aristotle—which everyone is entitled, of course, to question. [LS writes on the blackboard]. Now, we have here theoretical, and practical or political. Now, if this is the highest,¹¹ the simple superiority of the male sex [follows]—not of every man to every woman, that goes without saying, but at the peaks. But if this is denied, if the highest life is the practical or political life, there is no longer the same compelling reason to assert the supremacy of the male sex. Rousseau, in this political context, avails himself of this possibility—is this clear? I mean, take the simple scheme: there cannot be a female Aristotle; but there can be a female Alexander the Great—I mean, although there was not one, but it is theoretically possible. And therefore if you speak only in political terms, the position of women is boosted beyond what it was as long as the belief in the supremacy of the males is granted. Needless to say, there are many other considerations, because even politically there are very great objections made to the equality of the two sexes. I remind you, for example, of Spinoza’s argument against the participation of women in government: simply stated, there is an element—in our lingo—of “subjectivity” which comes in whenever a council would also have a woman among them—you know, that is a very common male prejudice which you must have heard from older people. The men do not argue any longer as objectively when the woman is present than when no woman is present, and this kind of thing. In other words, that has all to do with the same thing,¹² the passions: the woman is a more passionate being than the man.^{lxix}

Student: Doesn’t Rousseau even go beyond the point that you put here in this schema on the board, in this long paragraph you didn’t read, where he says that in so far as man is theoretical, that is, perfect, he owes his perfection to women?^{lxx}

LS: This is, I think, a reflection of that, yes.

Student: It’s all tied up I mean, he would even go beyond simply casting out the theoretical and say that even . . . because of the practical aspect you have this equality of the woman, but then when you bring back the theoretical aspect, though, woman adds this extra force to man’s—

LS: Yes, but this is a minor footnote, which is necessary, but which doesn’t affect the main point. Now we have to consider page 354, paragraph 2. Let us read first the beginning, when he has spoken of the famous Roman women.

Mr. Reinken: “I will go further and maintain that virtue is no less favourable to love than to other rights of nature—”

^{lxviii} E. 742; 570.

^{lxix} Spinoza, *Political Treatise* 11.4.

^{lxx} E, 737; 566.

LS: Is this not interesting, that love is here called a right of nature? Well, this has resounded throughout the generations, the right of love—against parents who prevented their children from marrying one another, you know, and all these other things—up to the present day. Go on.

Mr. Reinken: “and that it adds as much to the power of the beloved as to that of the wife or mother. There is no real love without enthusiasm, and no enthusiasm without an object of perfection real or supposed, but always present in the imagination. What is there to kindle the hearts of lovers for whom this perfection is nothing, for whom the loved one is merely the means to sensual pleasure? Nay, not thus is the heart kindled, not thus does it abandon itself to those sublime transports which form the rapture of lovers and the charm of love. Love is an illusion, I grant you, but its reality consists in the feelings it awakes, in the love of true beauty which it inspires. That beauty is not to be found in the object of our affections, it is the creation of our illusions.”

LS: “of our errors.”

Mr. Reinken: “What matter! do we not still sacrifice all those baser feelings to the imaginary model? and we still feed our hearts on the virtues we attribute to the beloved, we still withdraw ourselves from the baseness of human nature.^{lxxi} What lover is there who would not give his life for his mistress? What gross and sensual passion is there in a man who is willing to die? We scoff at the knights of old; they knew the meaning of love; we know nothing but debauchery. When the teachings of romance began to seem ridiculous, it was not so much the work of reason as of immorality.”^{lxxii}

LS: Yes; now, this ennobling character of delusions; and these delusions arise from the imagination. They are therefore not natural sentiments, according to the distinction made at the beginning of the work. And this must ultimately be understood in the light of the fact that civil society is not natural. But how are they precisely linked, the natural sentiments proper, and the one to which he refers? That is indicated in the following paragraph.

Mr. Reinken: “Natural relations remain the same throughout the centuries, their good or evil effects are unchanged; prejudices, masquerading as reason, can but change their outward seeming; self-mastery, even at the behest of fantastic opinions, will not cease to be great and good.”

LS: “and beautiful.”

Mr. Reinken: “And the true motives of honor will not fail to appeal to the heart of every woman who is able to seek happiness in life in her woman's duties. To a high-souled woman chastity above all must be a delightful virtue.”

LS: “For a beautiful woman,” he says—“*pour une belle femme*”—“who has some elevation in her soul.”

^{lxxi} “Of the human “I”, the “*moi humaine*.”

^{lxxii} *E*, 743; 570-71.

Mr. Reinken: “She sees all the kingdoms of the world before her and she triumphs over herself and them; she sits enthroned in her own soul^{lxxiii} and all men do her homage; a few passing struggles are crowned with perpetual glory; she secures the affection, or it may be the envy, she secures in any case the esteem of both sexes and the universal respect of her own. The loss is fleeting, the gain is permanent. What a joy for a noble heart—the pride of virtue combined with beauty. Let her be a heroine of romance; she will taste delights more exquisite than those of Lais and Cleopatra; and when her beauty is fled, her glory and her joys remain; she alone can enjoy the past.”^{lxxiv}

LS: Now, what is then the link between the natural sentiments, meaning sensual feelings, and virtue? I think he makes it very clear.

Student: Time?

LS: “*Gloire*,” glory, pride, “*orgueil*.” In other words, this, the feeling of superiority over others founded on her feeling of superiority over her desires: *amour-propre*. So, you see now how important it is, what Rousseau said in the *Second Discourse*: *amour-propre* is the root of all our vices *and* all our virtues; necessarily enters. So, in other words, the natural basis of these ennobling delusions, what is natural in them, is the feeling of pride, superiority. This we must not forget. Well, the point which Mr. Seltzer made earlier—I prevented him from speaking—is, I think, that comes out most clearly on page 353, in the first paragraph. That’s very long; we cannot possibly read it. I mean, this is the question of moral education: how to teach morality and not always say duty, duty, duty. But you must make Duty is the source—how does he put it?—“Duty is the source.”

Student: “Duties are the source of their pleasures and the basis of their rights.”^{lxxv}

LS: “the foundation of rights.” Yes, in other words, which could be said also from another point of view, but as Rousseau means it, I believe it means duty for the sake of pleasure and for the sake of rights; and then duty becomes immediately attractive. Whereas if it is preached as duty, it is not attractive. I believe something of this kind is what Mr. Seltzer had in mind. So, in other words, in spite of the seeming restoration of the older morality reminding of the Stoics and other things, it is an entirely different spirit [inaudible]. One cannot see Seneca writing such a treatise on woman; that is unlikely.

Now, it is very late

END OF LECTURE

¹ Deleted “in.”

² Moved “to do.”

³ Deleted “whether.”

^{lxxiii} “She raises a throne in her own heart.”

^{lxxiv} *E*, 743-44; 571.

^{lxxv} *E*, 741; 569.

⁴ Deleted “only because women.”

⁵ Deleted “their.”

⁶ Deleted “to.”

⁷ Deleted “which.”

⁸ Deleted “the.”

⁹ Deleted “would say.”

¹⁰ Deleted “women.”

¹¹ Deleted “it follows.”

¹² Deleted “less.”

Session 15

[In progress] **LS:** —can you explain it a bit?

Student: Well, both of them want a life, and a way to get to that life is clearly by learning how to master the life of the passions [inaudible].

LS: But still, I mean, I simply cannot quite understand the meaning of that. Perhaps someone else—I mean it was easier for me to follow Brother Chrysostom's paper because I have it in front of me, and you know, there are certain difficulties of understanding what you say—and perhaps someone of you has understood Brother Chrysostom and can help us better. The conclusion was not very clear. There were some other points, some very good formulations which I would like to [consider]. I return to you the two outside papersⁱ.

I think that was an especially good formulation: “Emile made a more prolonged stay in society than Sophie. He acquired the virtue of justice through enlightened compassion, and the virtue of temperance through the philosophy of taste.”ⁱⁱ I think that is quite a good formulation of these two wings, as I call them. You know: the middle, the Profession of Faith,¹ preceded by a non-religious moral teaching, and succeeded by a non-religious moral teaching. And one could very well say that the first is a teaching of justice through enlightened or generalized compassion, and the latter temperance through taste. That is, I think, a good formulation.

When you say “The close of adolescence is especially a time to enjoy life, which Aristotle and Rousseau both movingly describe,” of what did you think in Aristotle? A moving description of this. . . ?

Brother Chrysostom: By moving, I meant an impressive way.

LS: Yes, but where Aristotle; what did you have in mind?

Brother Chrysostom: His *Ethics*; his teaching there.

LS: Oh yes, I see: the chapter [concerning friendship]; yes, one can say that; surely in contrast to old age, what he said there.ⁱⁱⁱ That's true; I didn't think of that.

And then there was one more point: “In short, the burden of this book is how to bind a free man legitimately, if not quite naturally, because even a true love is not as natural as men think.” Now, does this not ring a bell, beyond the theme of marriage?

Brother Chrysostom: First sentence of the *Social Contract*.^{iv}

ⁱ The two seminar papers apparently prepared for this session.

ⁱⁱ Quoting from Brother Chrysostom's paper.

ⁱⁱⁱ *Nicomachean Ethics*, 1155a1-10.

^{iv} The first sentence of the first chapter: “Man is born free and everywhere is in chains.”

LS: Could you spell it out? I mean, what is the parallel to marriage?

Brother Chrysostom: Civil society.

LS: Yes; because there also, free men are chained, just as Emile is chained; and also there is a question of the naturalness of the chains. Yes; that I think we must always keep in mind, that when Rousseau speaks of marriage and everything connected to that, that this has also implications regarding civil society on the one hand and, by the way, regarding religion on the other. That was the point which you made last time, Mr. Reinken: you had something to say at the end of last meeting which I thought would interest the others; I forgot what it was.

Mr. Reinken: It's in reference to paragraph 3, page 346, and paragraphs 2 and 3, page 348; and the key—in paragraph 3, page 346, he enunciates the principle that what is, is good: “*ce qui est, est bien*.” Then there are 5 paragraphs where he—

LS: Can you say again on which page, because it is hard for me

Mr. Reinken: Page 346, paragraph 3, in the second sentence, he announces, “I discover in the end that what is, is good.”^v Long paragraph; some discussion, which leads him And he manages to get on the subject of feminine coquetry, and he begins, paragraph 2, page 348: “Behold! That which is,” or “this is what is,”—*ce qui est* as a reminder—“and we have seen why it should be”^{vi}—Foxley mistranslates. And he goes into a paragraph in praise of coquetry with a . . . particularly speaking of: “Does she not require a means of indicating her inclinations without open expression?”^{vii} And he says “I maintain that coquetry, kept within bounds, becomes modest and true, and out of it springs a law of decency.”^{viii}

LS: Yes.

Mr. Reinken: The third paragraph opens, “Virtue is one.”^{ix} This meant to me that the virtue of a coquette equals the virtue of the author, and, for further support, the real topic of the third paragraph repeats again the phrase “that which is,”^x only now he makes a distinction: moral truth is not that which is, but that which is good.”

LS: Yes.

Mr. Reinken: This is one point. “What is bad,” that is, that which *is* insofar as it is not bad, “ought not to be, and ought not to be avowed.” So he has now told us why coquetry is a necessity in one who is writing.

^v E, 732; 561.

^{vi} E, 734; 563.

^{vii} E, 734; 564.

^{viii} E, 735; 564.

^{ix} E, 735; 564.

^x *La vérite morale n'est pas ce qui est . . .* (E, 735; 564).

LS: Yes; can you state it now?

Mr. Reinken: In summary?

LS: Yes, in summary and coherently, and without reference to the text.

Mr. Reinken: He is implying, plainly, that it is damaging to tell dangerous truths about things which are which ought not to be, [and] should not be told; and further he is telling you that some things have to be told, but not openly.

LS: Yes, but does it not amount, what you say, to what I said last time: the coincidence of what is and what ought to be is brought about by not avowing what is. The simple example, the girl cannot speak of her desire; and in a way, her desire becomes non-existent by not being spoken; and yet it is of course a somewhat fictitious coincidence of the is and ought to be. But at the end of the last class, you said something which I had *not* said, and I believe it was along these lines: is there not a parallel between the girl, the bashful girl, and Rousseau as a writer? That, I believe, is the point you want to make. This you haven't made now; can you restate it?

Mr. Reinken: I thought I had just made it.

LS: Well, I am dense; I didn't see it.

Mr. Reinken: I think what Rousseau is being bashful about is the assertion that not all is well.

LS: Oh, I see; you mean in a more general way: Rousseau does not avow certain things which are; and to that extent In other words, he is in his way bashful, in a different way than the girl is. And this bashfulness brings about in both cases a coincidence of what is and what should be. Or is this the point which you . . . ?

Mr. Reinken: It would destroy the worth of telling these things if he came right out and said them. That is what he says of the girl. I do not follow this business, the identification of making a thing good by saying so; but it is bad to avow, but good to communicate.

LS: I see; in other words, while Sophie cannot in propriety avow, yet she makes Emile feel that she loves him—is that the point which you mean?

Mr. Reinken: Yes.

LS: Yes, and this also finds a parallel in Rousseau's own conduct as a writer.

Mr. Reinken: Yes.

LS: Good; well, it's surely worth considering, and very much.

Brother Chrysostom, I liked your paper. It was very good; it was only hard to follow for the class for reasons for which no one can hold you responsible. Now, let us turn to the context, to page

356 in the translation, I mean, so that we know what the context is. Oh, there is one question which has something to do with the context: you stated very clearly the fact, Rousseau's assertion, [that] the love of the two young people comes first. And the prudential considerations, regarding whether the families fit, come later. But what happens here in this quasi-novel? Or did you not notice that? How [does it] come [about] that they meet?

Brother Chrysostom: A put-up job.

LS: Sure: an absolutely arranged affair, you know; they had nothing to do with it. And this is only a repetition of the artfulness of the whole education, even extending to that stage of Emile's alleged maturity and freedom.

Student: [Inaudible] somehow he never seems to come out and say it until later.

LS: Yes, he only, he alludes to it rather subtly; but it is, I think, very clear. He doesn't emphasize this—I mean, when one overlooks a few lines, one can easily get the impression that it was a mere accident that [they meet]—this bad weather, and they went to that house; but that Rousseau had correspondence with the parents, and this was all arranged, this he doesn't stress. But he alludes to it very clearly, whereas at least . . . You have noticed it too?

Student: Yes, I noticed it. One thing I noticed that is funny, that Emile isn't wise to this sort of tactic: it's been done before.

LS: Yes, but he is *un homme vulgaire*, you know; he is not *too* bright. Now, let us read on page 356, the second paragraph.

Mr. Reinken: "This is the spirit in which Sophie has been educated, she has been trained carefully rather than strictly, and her taste has been followed rather than thwarted. Let us say just a word about her person, according to the description I have given to Emile and the picture he himself has formed of the wife in whom he hopes to find happiness."

LS: This purely imaginary picture of the perfect wife is a copy of reality, you know? Now, go on.

Mr. Reinken: "I cannot repeat too often that I am not dealing with prodigies. Emile is no prodigy—"

LS: You see?

Mr. Reinken: "—neither is Sophie. He is a man and she is a woman; this is all they have to boast of. In the present confusion between the sexes it is almost a miracle to belong to one's own sex."^{xi}

LS: It comes out more clearly in the French, because he says, does he not say, "Emile is not a prodigy; nor is Sophie. But that he is a man and she is a woman, that is the prodigy in the present

^{xi} *E*, 746; 573.

confusion.” So, this much about the overall context. Now, let us turn to page 363, in the second paragraph. We can of course not read everything.

Mr. Reinken: “‘Husband and wife should choose each other.’”

LS: That’s what the father says. The father makes a long speech to his daughter.

Mr. Reinken: “‘A mutual liking should be the first bond between them. They should follow the guidance of their own eyes and hearts; when they are married their first duty will be to love one another, and as love and hatred do not depend on ourselves—’”

LS: By the way, “love and not loving.” He doesn’t use such a harsh word as hating, which would be wholly improper.

Mr. Reinken: “‘this duty brings another with it, and they must begin to love each other before marriage. That is the law of nature—’”

LS: “the *right* of nature.” Here right definitely has a subjective sense: it is not a duty, but a right.

Mr. Reinken: “‘—and no power can abrogate it; those who have fettered it by so many legal restrictions’—”

LS: “many civil laws”—you see, Rousseau is really much more precise here—meaning, civil laws which prevent certain kinds of marriages.

Mr. Reinken: “—have given heed rather to the outward show of order than to the happiness of marriage or the morals of the citizen. You see, my dear Sophie, we do not preach a harsh morality. It tends to make you your own mistress and to make us leave the choice of your husband to yourself.”^{xii}

LS: Let us stop here for the moment. You see here, he seems to assert clearly the primacy of the right of nature, that those who love one another should marry one another; because love cannot command. Now, but the question of course is: is *this* love, the conjugal love, which is commanded—that the husband should cherish his wife—this love does not . . . This kind of love, which has the right of nature does of course not necessarily last throughout life; and marriage is supposed to last throughout life. There must be another reason in support of this right of nature. I mean, the love of the two young people who wish to marry is not sufficient for making marriage possible. It may be a reason for *marrying*; but it is not sufficient for the marriage itself. Now, let us turn to page 362, second paragraph from bottom.

Mr. Reinken: “‘There is a natural suitability, there is a suitability of established usage—’”

LS: “of institutions,” he says.

^{xii} *E*, 756; 581.

Mr. Reinken: ““and a suitability which is merely conventional. Parents should decide as to the two matters, and the children themselves should decide as to the former.””

LS: You see, the only thing which is natural, and the only thing regarding which there can be a natural right: whether they love one another, this love for one another based on natural suitability. Yes.

Mr. Reinken: ““Marriages arranged by parents^{xiii} only depend on a suitability of custom and convention; it is not two people who are united, but two positions and two properties; but these things may change, the people remain, they are always there; and in spite of fortune it is the personal relation that makes a happy or an unhappy marriage.””^{xiv}

LS: Now, we have something different: not simply love, but natural suitability. Now, these are obviously very different considerations: people may be in love with one another, and may be wholly unsuited for living together, you know? That natural suitability is the more solid thing than the suitability of the paternal wealth and paternal rank may be true, but this is surely not the feeling of love, this natural suitability. I think it is perfectly clear that a man and woman could be perfectly suitable to each other, and there would not necessarily be that *X* called passionate love, and vice versa. But still, whatever the difficulties may be, we must not forget, in fairness to Rousseau, that it is not a speech of Rousseau, but of² [Sophie's] father in this situation. So, it fulfills its rhetorical function, to bring³ [Sophie] into the proper shape; that's all we can reasonably expect. Now, a little minor thing on page 364, at the end of the fourth paragraph.

Mr. Reinken: “Ardent as an Italian and sentimental as an Englishwoman, she has a curb upon heart and sense in the pride of a Spaniard, who even when she seeks a lover does not easily discover one worthy of her.”^{xv}

LS: In other words, she is a composite of a number of European nations. It is interesting what he says about these different nations, but one thing: why he makes the selection. Did you notice? There is one nation of which he has nothing.

Student: Germany.

LS: That's true; but that is somewhat far-fetched, for Rousseau anyway, at that time. French, of course. She is wholly un-French. That is the criticism implied here.

Student: He is always talking about cold-blooded French women.

LS: Yes. No, he is very critical of the French throughout, we have seen, and that is one little indication of it. No, I think Rousseau didn't know Germans at all. You know, Italians he knew, of course, because he had stayed in Italy for some time; and Spaniards I do not know, but

^{xiii} “Marriages that are made by the authority of fathers.”

^{xiv} *E*, 755; 581.

^{xv} *E*, 758; 583.

perhaps he knew it, had some inkling from Spanish literature. But of Germany I think he knew nothing.^{xvi}

Student: Is there some other reason why sometimes he's very parochial and others he's very cosmopolitan—Rousseau himself? In his *First Discourse* [inaudible] would be more an Emilian type human being than cosmopolitan. On the other hand . . .

LS: No, that goes through all his works, the critique of cosmopolitanism. But there is, nevertheless, a difference. After all, as a theoretician, he cannot belong to any particular nationality. I mean, mathematics cannot . . .

Student: This is more or less a description.

LS: For a girl, for a woman, yes.

Student: Also it's his own Emile, too.

LS: No, that is, I think, Rousseau's own judgment. And the only reasonable answer to it would be, the French way of treating these things is the worst, and therefore the silence about it. It is not very important, of course. Now, we come to a few other pages. We begin on page 367, bottom. This is probably in the middle of a paragraph, the paragraph beginning . . .

Mr. Reinken: "Sophie was in love with Telemachus."

LS: Yes, Telemachus, the hero of Fénelon's education [inaudible].^{xvii} In the middle of this paragraph: "Does the heart depend on will?"

Mr. Reinken: "Is the heart controlled by the will? Did my father not ask that very question?^{xviii} Is it my fault if I love what has no existence? I am no visionary; I desire no prince, I seek no Telemachus, I know he is only an imaginary person; I seek some one like him. And why should there be no such person, since there is such a person as I—"

LS: No, this is more a [place where we] need [to be precise]: "And why would he not, could not someone like this exist since *I* exist." Like Descartes: "*j'existe*"; "*puisque j'existe, moi*." But she gives it a more special turn. I believe that has really a much broader bearing than seems to be . . . this Cartesian turn here, but . . .

Student: This is the proof of God, isn't it?

^{xvi} Perhaps not, though he may have learned something of it from his early friendship with the German-born and educated Grimm. Whatever his knowledge or ignorance of Germany, he was willing to characterize the German attitude toward travel elsewhere in *Emile* (*E*, 829; 642). Indeed, he characterizes the conversation of German women in *Julie* (Jean-Jacques Rousseau, *Julie or the New Heloise*, trans. Philip Stewart and Jean Vaché (Hanover, NH-London: University Press of New England, 1997).

^{xvii} Fénelon (1651-1715), among the most important political and religious thinkers of the generation before Rousseau's was the author of the *Adventures of Telemachus* (1699), a novel concerning education.

^{xviii} "Did my father not say it himself?"

LS: In a way, yes; in a way. It is a kind of ideal. Well, let us read the whole sentence again: ““And why can this someone not exist, since *I* exist, I who feel in myself a heart so similar to his?”” Yes, go on.

Mr. Reinken: “No, let us not wrong humanity so greatly, let us not think that an amiable and virtuous man is a figment of the imagination. He exists, he lives, perhaps he is seeking me; he is seeking a soul which is capable of love for him. But who is he, where is he? I know not; he is not among those I have seen; and no doubt I shall never see him. Oh! mother, why did you make virtue too attractive? If I can love nothing less, you are more to blame than I.”^{”xix}

LS: Yes; now we read one more passage at the end of the next paragraph.

Mr. Reinken: “I have no need to go so far to show, by what I consider a sufficiently striking example, that in spite of the prejudices arising from the manners of our age, the enthusiasm for the good^{xx} and the beautiful is no more foreign to women than to men, and that there is nothing which, under nature's guidance, cannot be obtained from them as well as from us.”

LS: This is Rousseau's *own* remark now. Now we must see that: women are by nature as capable of the highest enthusiasm for virtue, as much as men can [be]. Now, let us read the two following paragraphs, which are very difficult.

Mr. Reinken: “You stop me here to inquire whether it is nature which teaches us to take such pains to repress our immoderate desires. No, I reply, but neither is it nature who gives us these immoderate desires. Now, all that is not from nature is contrary to nature, as I have proved again and again.”

LS: “as I have proved a thousand times.” Go on.

Mr. Reinken: “Let us give Emile his Sophie; let us restore this sweet girl to life and provide her with a less vivid imagination and a happier fate. I desired to paint an ordinary woman, but by endowing her with a great soul,^{xxi} I have disturbed her reason. I have gone astray. Let us retrace our steps. Sophie has only a good disposition and an ordinary heart—”

LS: “and an ordinary soul.”^{”xxii}

Mr. Reinken: “—her education is responsible for everything in which she excels other women.”^{”xxiii}

LS: This is a hard passage. Now, he had said first that woman is as capable of the highest enthusiasm for virtue as is man. Now, this highest enthusiasm makes her miserable, as he has

^{xix} *E*, 762-63; 586-87.

^{xx} “the decent.”

^{xxi} “by elevating her soul.”

^{xxii} “a good nature in a common soul.”

^{xxiii} *E*, 763; 587-88.

described in the preceding paragraph. She cannot have this highest enthusiasm, seems to be the end of this reflection, because she has a common soul. I mean, he has given Sophie an enthusiasm which only a very *rare* woman could have, and he has to retract that now. Only the sublime souls can have such an enthusiasm. She cannot have that enthusiasm because she does not have a very vivid imagination. Sublimity of the soul and a very vivid imagination seem to belong together. And the whole statement seems to imply that the enthusiasm for virtue is not natural. That is my impression, but I am not sure of whether I understood it correctly. Does any one of you have some suggestion? You see that is very evasive.

Student: There's [inaudible] involved when you were explaining the link between that very vivid imagination and the sublimity of the soul, because it seems that Sophie, whom Rousseau had painted immediately preceding this passage, had the very vivid imagination. Am I correct?

LS: Yes, but Sophie becomes in a way incurable. She was seeking for a man whom she would never find.

Student: But he didn't say anything about what sort of soul she had there, did he?

LS: No, but he makes here, he says, "*je me suis égaré moi-même*," he has—how do you translate that?—taken the wrong road myself. So he must, he has done so in endowing Sophie with this degree of enthusiasm for virtue, through which Sophie becomes miserable and incurable. And now he reminds himself of the true Sophie, who cannot have such an enthusiasm, and therefore who can be cured so as to become able to become Emile's wife.

Student: I was wondering why it was necessary to say the enthusiasm for virtue was unnatural; even though, of course, this first Sophie dies because she cannot find [someone who resembles Telemachus in virtue]. It does not seem exactly rare, but . . .

LS: That's a good question, but I believe I can answer it, although I cannot quote chapter and verse now. We read earlier statements to the effect that the natural desires are those which do not depend on the imagination—I suppose some of you may remember that—and therefore, if the sublimity of the soul is connected with a very vivid imagination, then it means the goals of the sublime soul are not natural goals. I am sorry that I don't remember the passage, but it was in the first book.^{xxiv}

Student: In a sense illusions are necessary throughout, and in some way to noble life, I suppose—not natural but very desirable?

LS: Yes, but still, given Rousseau's principle, to which he refers us here again, that only the natural can be good, then there remains a question mark. We have seen this throughout the [inaudible] all his praise of love; there is always the admission there is something factitious in it, and therefore, that means something unnatural.

Student: But is there something higher that . . . ?

^{xxiv} I believe *E*, 304; 211 is what Strauss has in mind, though it is in Book 2. [Ed.]

LS: Yes, there is something higher.

Student: Could you say something about Fénelon's *Telemachus*? I have only the vague impression that it was subversive.

LS: No; I think Fénelon was very critical of the absolute monarchy, and of the terrible things he did; that is not exactly subversive. I mean, he was not a favorite with the court; he had some trouble, I seem to remember that.^{xxv}

Student: The only thing I know about it is a funny⁴ act of Louis XV when he was a boy and had a printing press, and his first job of printing was little pamphlets—⁵ [Maxims drawn from] *Telemachus*—which he brought to his grandfather who looked at it, and because they were republican—he opened the one which was republican, and said, M. le Dauphin, you have just printed your last pamphlet; break up the type.^{xxvi}

LS: I see. Well I think only the *Telemachus* was very famous as a book inspiring a charitable Christianity, and not the persecution of fanatical views. This was, I suppose, the reason why Rousseau liked it. And it was one of the most, perhaps the most famous education of a French writer—you know, education of the prince is, of course, the theme, Telemachus being the son of Odysseus. He is presented as a perfectly educated young man. You remember, when he appears in the *Odysseus*, some modern Englishmen called him a prig, but these modern Englishmen have different tastes from the seventeenth and eighteenth century French, obviously.

Student: I'm trying to reconcile your interpretation of this paragraph with some others of Rousseau's statements. You couldn't say that . . . Or could you say that a woman's love of virtue is natural, but her enthusiastic love of virtue is not natural?

LS: No, on the contrary. I mean, the question is this: Rousseau has spoken about this quite a few times—there is a basic stratum of love; and that is the pure, the mere sexual desire, which prudes also have. And the naturalness of that Rousseau doesn't question. He only questions whether men cannot live, and live contentedly, without exercising, without having the desire. You remember, he says somewhere it is not a natural need, a physical need, and meaning by that, in contradistinction to self-preservation. Man cannot live without taking care of his self-preservation, but he can live without sexual life. That is, I think, what he means. But let us disregard this subtlety. Man is a sexual being; he has also sexual needs like the other animals. But then the specifically human, what we mean by love, preference for *this* individual, *ad hanc*, this is already not quite natural, because it is based on comparison—we have seen this argument. Now, but the different thing is, of course, the question of virtue. Now, I believe that what I suggested, that the implication of this passage is that the enthusiasm for virtue is *not* natural, i.e. not unqualifiedly natural, will come out in the sequel, if you follow that.

Student: I don't know the context of that phrase, the sublime science of the simple soul, but is that virtue?

^{xxv} Fénelon's *Maxims of the Saints* (1697) was condemned by the Inquisition, and Louis XIV had Fénelon removed as court tutor over the *Maxims*.

^{xxvi} This story is told of the young Louis XVI.

LS: The sublime science? The conscience, rather. That occurs at the end of the *First Discourse*; and I think that is addressed to the conscience.^{xxvii} But this is a very long [argument]; you know that; we have seen this question.

Student: I wanted to make an identification, the matter of the natural is good: is this not another side of the assertion—which he says, back some pages ago, is his fundamental principle—that which is, is good? He said it at that time in the context of that which is as that which we find about us in society; but he does in practice apply it even more often to that which is, that which is by nature, is good; and we saw . . .

LS: No; let us make a distinction. Rousseau can, of course, not say unqualifiedly that everything that is, is good; then the most abominable tyrannies would be good—and to say nothing of other things—that he cannot mean. Now but if you say everything which is natural is good, and *only* everything which is natural is good—which he seems to say—⁶then you come up against certain difficulties, because if you take this very literally, you come back to the subhuman human which we have seen in the *Second Discourse*: you know, the stupid animal, where nothing artificial of any kind has entered. And then everything human would be bad. And that surely cannot be his serious view. And therefore we must see . . . I believe we find in the sequel some explanation of that.

Mr. Butterworth: Just one slight question. I find some difficulty in what you say, for two reasons. The first is that it^{xxviii} would seem that it would have to be an immediate consequence of this, that this present speech is limited only to women, that therefore he doesn't really have anything to say about the highest enthusiasm for virtue in regards to men. He doesn't recreate a new Emile, or anything like this; he doesn't really say anything else about . . .

LS: All right; that I admit. That I admit, that this statement in itself could be valid, would apply to women only; and that one could say. But whether that's sufficient is another matter. I doubt that, but on the basis of this passage,⁷ you are right.

Mr. Butterworth: And then the other thing I wondered about in regard to what Mr. Schrock said, in that passage at the end of the *First Discourse*, I just noticed it—I have it here—Rousseau says: “Virtue! sublime science of simple souls.”

LS: Oh, virtue. Yes.

Student: Now, that would mean that we have to regard virtue on a sort of a bifurcated level.

LS: In which way?

^{xxvii} Rousseau mentions both virtue and conscience in this passage, but the student is closer to the truth, because, as a student will note shortly, the passage begins “O virtue! Sublime science of simple souls” (*FD*, 30; 22).

^{xxviii} The claim that enthusiasm for virtue is not natural.

Student: The virtue that we have encountered heretofore has been that which comes from *amour-propre*

LS: Sure. In other words, this statement at the end of the *First Discourse* is a statement which cannot be compared in theoretical sophistication with what we have going through the *Emile*, that is clear.

Student: No, but even in the *Emile*, the virtue that we have encountered heretofore has been that which comes from⁸ pity, and when we trace pity back, we get pride and *amour-propre*.

LS: Yes.

Student: But now we're getting into another kind of virtue which makes people fall by the way, but most specifically makes women fall by the way.

LS: No, I think that would only mean the difference between the virtue of the man and the virtue of the woman; whether this would be so relevant here, I doubt that. But . . . Mr. Morrison.

Mr. Morrison: [Inaudible beginning] I wonder whether this business about the difference, what is involved here, whether the different treatment of the two sexes isn't in fact rather cruel. The paragraph that follows this seems tied in with it, where he says that originally he was going to start off by building Sophie up from ground level, too, but then he decided that this wouldn't do, because It seems to me that somehow why that wouldn't do is that, if you think of your lines on the board again, that they would somehow meet, and that this is somehow a difficulty, that natural man and natural woman, as you might say, brought up in this way, wouldn't

LS: Let me see. If I understand you correctly, you continue the argument of Mr. Butterworth.

Mr. Morrison: To some extent, yes.

LS: Yes, and so that you would limit the statement to the virtue of women. Now, in the case of women, it is quite true—that we have seen—according to Rousseau's description the education of the woman is from the very beginning unnatural, entirely in the element of opinion; whereas in the case of *Emile* it is up to a point entirely *without* any concern for opinion.

Mr. Morrison: And the particular thing is that I wonder whether, with his sort of—some of his premises which he's used earlier—he isn't in some kind of a difficulty⁹ in whether to regard woman, as opposed to man, as fundamentally asocial. Because she is—in some sense she is dependent in a sense which the man is not.

LS: No, but he has said so emphatically, that woman—any woman—must be educated, from the very beginning of her life, in dependence on opinion or prejudice. The woman, woman has such a nature that without becoming radically conventional she cannot be happy; because otherwise, very simply, if she would remain natural, then she would get a very bad reputation, whatever . . . even if she behaves very decently, you know, because she must even avoid any appearance, *any* appearance. So, I mean, woman is the hopelessly conventional sex, if woman is to be good. In

the case of man it is different: most men are also hopelessly conventional; Rousseau has made here the experiment with one common man whom he educated so that he will remain as natural, until he is about eighteen or twenty, as man can possibly be. But then at this moment, when he is twenty, the union, a certain union, of citizen and man takes place through the Profession of Faith of the Savoyard Vicar, if I understand it correctly.

Student: And through Sophie.

LS: Pardon? Yes, in another way. But so that Rousseau, in other words [LS writes on the blackboard.] . . . No, Emile is now this here; and Sophie was . . . There never was such a bifurcation of woman and she-citizen. Woman is, so to speak, from the very beginning citizen; whereas here the cleavage exists. That I believe is the situation.

Mr. Morrison: But isn't that the key to the problem here?

LS: Yes, now, but the striking thing is this: that—this is my objection to what you and Mr. Butterworth would say—while he speaks here emphatically of women only, he also speaks very emphatically of nature; and therefore he reminds us of this overall problem. But I believe we will find the solution in the sequel.

Student: One thing about your saying that woman is equal to the citizen; still, women could destroy, say, society, it seems to me, simply by their sexual passion.

LS: Yes, but then they are very defective. And this shows in their own lives by misery. I mean, that is not interesting. But the best woman, the good woman, is necessarily opinion-guided, and in this sense citizen. The best man is not . . . Yes, we have another possibility—we can never . . . I will restate it: Emile is a common man; and then there is a third individual in our drama, and who is that?

Student: Rousseau.

LS: Jean-Jacques. Now, Jean-Jacques is, according to this claim, the natural man. In other words, his being the citizen of Geneva is something separate within him from the best and highest in Jean-Jacques. And how does this come about? This is, by the way, my answer to the question, what is the standard in the light of which Rousseau judges love, plus enthusiasm for virtue? And that is the sentiment of existence; the sentiment of existence which is higher—Mr. Reinken's beatific vision—for Rousseau. I mean, Rousseau's counterpart to the theoretical life, of which Emile is incapable and Sophie is incapable, but of which Rousseau is capable. Now, Mr. Johnson first.

Mr. Johnson: I had a feeling from the last two books, that at, in the beginning, when Emile was raised by Rousseau [inaudible] artificial things about him; but after having finished his product, he suddenly discovered that not only woman in the sense of modern society, but the basic inclinations of the woman were in almost considerable opposition to the natural man, once he is finished with the natural man. To a great extent Emile was finished for Sophie in the same book. And he has to even go further against what one might call almost like the nature of Sophie:

certain inclinations have to be molded in order to make *Emile* possible, because otherwise all his work will be lost.

LS: Yes; but how does this contradict it?

Mr. Johnson: Well, in some sense she is unnatural.

LS: Unnatural, sure; but this makes her a worthy wife for *Emile*.

Mr. Johnson: No, I mean in some sense he has to. I almost have the feeling he has to make the strongest twisting of the custom to make up for the much greater defects on the part of Sophie, such as the tendency to be guided by public opinion, and so forth. So that she has to be remade in such a way She can't stop from being guided in this way, but she might be able to construct [a kind of goodness] within a certain kind of public opinion.

LS: Yes, that is clear; that is the meaning of the bringing up of a decent girl, that's it. By this fact she becomes a good, proper girl. Whereas in the case of *Emile*, this was not necessary and not desirable: he should be brought up in perfect freedom from any prejudice; whereas the other is different. Mr. Morrison.

Mr. Morrison: I had a sort of a question which is on the same line. There is sort of—the basic principle which has been underlying all the discussion in the *Emile* so far is that man is radically asocial. Is it true to say that, from Rousseau's point of view, this is not true of women?

LS: No; women by nature are, of course, as asocial as men. And only the human female—that's the only way in which one can talk about it—differs from the other animal females because there are no seasons; therefore she is much more sexual than the females of other animal species are. And this requires, then, that in the case of the human female a very severe upbringing; a very severe upbringing, so that she can live tolerably happy—and needless to say that from Rousseau's point of view that is not very perfect happiness, because there is a constant conflict between her desires and the convention. Therefore he wrote his novel, *Julie, or the New Heloise*, in which he presents this conflict of a very virtuous woman—well, she was not very virtuous when she was young; but from the moment of her marriage on, she was absolutely virtuous. And she was apparently the happiest wife and mother you can imagine; and in the depths of her heart, she was unhappy, because she had not married the man she loved. And by the way, it is a very good illustration of the things he discusses here. Now, that's the last question now, Mr. Butterworth.

Mr. Butterworth: Just one thing that bothers me: there's a point in the book where Rousseau very explicitly goes against this thing that has been building up, of the woman being subjugated to opinion. And it's not explicitly his own words, but it's almost his own words—and this is the speech of Sophie's father, which Rousseau prefaces by saying, Sophie's father spoke to her thus or almost thusly.^{xxix} It's almost the last sentence of the speech: "One of the most important things in a woman's life, you can marry anyone you want." And then he says, "If all the earth would

^{xxix} *E*, 754; 580.

blame us for this marriage, what does it matter? We don't look for public approbation; it suffices for us to have your happiness."^{xxx}

LS: Yes, this can be on various levels. I mean the father means it sincerely; but he is not fully aware of what this implies.

Mr. Butterworth: The thing that I'm curious about is that, is it truly the father who is speaking here; since Rousseau prefaces it by saying "almost"; he says that the father spoke almost . . .

LS: Yes, that is true. What this implies is that there is something in this speech which no father would literally say; and one would have to find out precisely what that is.

Student: *Toioutos*.

LS: *Toioutos*, absolutely: "such like things," as the Greeks, as Xenophon and Plato say. Yes, exactly the same. So he knew that, either because he has read it or because he has re-invented it. Now, we go on; we turn to page 368, in the last paragraph, the second half of it: "One must not confound what is . . ." Do you have that?

Mr. Reinken: "We must not confuse what is suitable in a state of savagery—"

LS: No: "what is natural to the savage state."

Mr. Reinken: "natural to the state of savagery with what is suitable in civilised life."

LS: Again, "natural." Now you see, Rousseau makes now this indispensable correction, because otherwise what he says would be entirely uninteresting if he would only speak of what is natural in the state of nature. So, there is something—in spite of the essentially conventional character of the civil state—there is something natural to it. Let us go on here.

Mr. Reinken: "In the former, any woman will suit any man, for both are still in their primitive and undifferentiated condition—"

LS: In other words, they are like beasts.

Mr. Reinken: "in the latter, all their characteristics have been developed—"

LS: More literally, "every character having been developed by social institutions."

Mr. Reinken: "the ranks have been distinguished—"^{xxxi}

^{xxx} *E*, 758; 583.

^{xxxi} This line does not appear in any version of the Foxley translation I have come across. It is a possible translation of a line that occurs in the next paragraph: "The ill is that in developing characters the social state distinguishes ranks." [Ed.]

LS: Where is “ranks”? “and every spirit, or mind, having received its proper and determinate form, not only from education, but through the well- or ill-regulated concurrence of the natural and of education,” i.e. of the natural and of the conventional, “one can no longer” How does it go on?

Mr. Reinken: “we can only make a match [by introducing them to each other to see if they suit each other in every respect, or at least we can let them make that choice which gives the most] promise of mutual suitability.”^{xxxii}

LS: Now, the crucial distinction which he makes here between character and spirit or mind, that has very much to do with it, because virtue belongs obviously to the character. So, the character is developed by social institutions. The mind, on the other hand, does not receive its proper and determinate form *only* by social institutions, only by education, but also by nature. The distinction of minds, the difference of minds, is a natural distinction. The difference of characters is much less a natural distinction, to be careful—strictly speaking, there is nothing said here of any natural difference of characters. So, the mind and the difference of minds is natural. Now, let us turn to page 369, the second paragraph.

Mr. Reinken: “The difficulty is this: while social life develops character it differentiates classes, and these two classifications do not correspond, so that the greater the social distinctions, the greater the difficulty of finding the corresponding character. Hence we have ill-assorted marriages and all their accompanying evils; and we find that it follows logically that the further we get from equality, the greater the change in our natural feelings; the wider the distance between great and small, the looser the marriage tie; the deeper the gulf between rich and poor, the fewer husbands and fathers.”^{xxxiii}

LS: Let us leave it at this. The context is again the primary context: how to get suitable matches. But in order to understand what suitability means, he has to consider all ingredients; and we have seen, first, two ingredients: spirit and character. Now, he drops spirit, and speaks only of character. And he speaks then of the disharmony between good or bad characters and social rank—in other words, a poor girl who is good, and a rich man who is bad. But this rich man who is bad can easily get this poor girl via the interference of the girl’s parents, who wish to marry her off for the sake of her happiness. And you can easily figure out all other possible combinations; because there is not only rich and poor, there is also nobleman and commoners, and so on, and so on. But this disharmony between the good or bad characters and social rank is, according to what we have read before, a disharmony between two things which are both not simply natural. Why? I mean, that the ranks are not natural is clear, because wealth and poverty, nobility and commonness depends on the law. It’s clear that it depends on the law because without property laws, no property; no rich and poor. The distinction between noblemen and commoners is also a legal distinction. Now, as regards good and bad characters, that depends decisively on education, on breeding, not on nature.

Now, let us turn to page 370, in the second paragraph. We have only to read the center of that paragraph. I mean, he discusses now the casuistry of marriage: who should marry whom; and the

^{xxxii} E, 764; 588.

^{xxxiii} E, 764; 588.

net result is, it is all right if the man is wealthier or nobler than the woman¹⁰ [but it is not all right] the other way around. Because otherwise a wholly unnatural dependence of the husband on the wife takes place: if she has all the money, or if she comes from the noble family, then he is a tolerated intruder, and that doesn't make for the husband's authority within the marriage. It is simple common sense. But we must now consider the more fundamental question. "When he marries in the lower rank." Do you have that? "When he marries a woman of lower rank, he does not descend, he elevates his spouse."

Mr. Reinken: "a man does not lower himself, he raises his wife; if, on the other hand, he marries above his position, he lowers his wife and does not raise himself. Thus there is in the first case—"

LS: This is, of course, really elementary common sense; just figure it out for yourself: a girl from a noble family marries in a lower family; what will the other girls of her rank say about her *mésalliance*? She married below her rank; she is no longer [one of them], they can no longer entertain her, perhaps; a terrible misfortune, naturally. But now we come to the next point. Go on where you left off.

Mr. Reinken: "in the first case good unmixed with evil, in the other evil unmixed with good. Moreover, the law of nature bids the woman obey the man. If he takes a wife from a lower class, natural and civil law are in accordance and all goes well. When he marries a woman of higher rank it is just the opposite case; the man must choose between diminished rights or imperfect gratitude; he must be ungrateful or despised."^{xxxiv}

LS: Let us stop here. In other words, the key sentence is this: when he takes her from a lower rank, the natural order and the civil order are in agreement, and everything goes well. Now here, natural order has of course Natural order¹¹ no longer¹² [means] what it meant before. Natural order means the order derivative from the fact that man is—has a higher rank in marriage than the woman. If this is the natural It does not mean more than that here. So, this is only an example of the fluidity of the manner . . . of the flexibility of Rousseau's usage. Let us turn to page 371, paragraph 3. We must read that full paragraph.

Mr. Reinken: "By nature man thinks but seldom."^{xxxv}

END OF TAPE SIDE ONE

LS: —"doesn't think at all," "*ne pense guère*."

Mr. Reinken: "hardly thinks. He learns to think, Thinking is an art he acquires like all the others."

LS: Mr. Butterworth, you looked You are not sure that I'm right.

Mr. Butterworth: I didn't understand what you said.

^{xxxiv} E, 766; 590.

^{xxxv} E, 767; 591.

LS: I see; but . . . “does not think at all.”

Mr. Butterworth: “Hardly.”

LS: “Hardly”? “Not at all” is too strong?

Mr. Butterworth: He said “*ne pense guère*,” not “*ne pense pas*.”

LS: Thank you. So, I apologize to our master. But “seldom” is surely not the proper translation. Go on.

Mr. Reinken: “like all the others, but with even greater difficulty. In both sexes alike I am only aware of two really distinct classes, those who think and those who do not; and this difference is almost entirely one of education.”

LS: “*almost* entirely.” This is a distinction which has a root in nature. Yes.

Mr. Reinken: “A man who thinks should not ally himself with a woman who does not think, for he loses the chief delight of social life if he has a wife who cannot share his thoughts. People who spend their whole life in working for a living have no ideas beyond their work and their own interests, and their mind seems to reside in their arms. This ignorance is not necessarily unfavorable either to their honesty or their morals; it is often favorable; we often content ourselves with thinking about our duties, and in the end we substitute words for things. Conscience is the most enlightened philosopher; to be an honest man we need not read Cicero's *De Officiis*, and the most virtuous woman in the world is probably she who knows least about virtue.”

LS: “least [knows] what is honesty,” “who knows least.” In other words, she is the least Socratic; she never raises the question what is decency; because, one could rightly say, if she raises this question, that’s very critical. Yes.

Mr. Reinken: “But it is nonetheless true that a cultivated mind alone makes intercourse pleasant, and it is a sad thing for a father of a family, who delights in his home, to be forced to shut himself up in himself and to be unable to make himself understood.”^{xxxvi}

LS: Now, here we see again, we come back; thinking has of course to do with the mind or the *esprit*; and this rests . . . This most fundamental distinction of the human race—that is almost Platonic or Aristotelian—is that between those who think and those who do not think. And this distinction is based primarily on natural distinction. *The* distinction within the human race concerns thinking; and this, as appears from the sequel, has nothing to do with morality, because—we have seen from the last part of this statement—morality does not depend on that. The conscience is much better as a guidance here than Cicero’s *Offices*, or any other theoretical book. Do you see the point? I mean, I think I have almost proved my interpretation, with the

^{xxxvi} *E*, 767; 591.

exception of one point: what is the status of the conscience? What is the status of the conscience. Did you follow the argument? No, you must wait a moment.

Student: No, I didn't follow.

LS: You didn't follow? That's the reason why I will repeat it.

Student: But just in this, in that you said that the distinction largely is natural, and he says it's largely based on education.

LS: But what does this imply? He says—he goes very far—he says this difference derives almost uniquely from education—i.e. it does not simply derive from education; it does have a natural root.

Student: Yes, but that's not the same as saying the distinction is largely natural.

LS: But, no, you must see it in the context of the argument: there was the passage from which we started, [which] seemed to suggest that the enthusiasm for virtue is not natural—that was our starting point. Then we read a distinction, on page 236, in the last paragraph, between the spirit in contradistinction to the character, and there it was clearly stated—or almost clearly stated—that the spirit was natural and the character is due to education or convention. This we have in mind; and this we must keep in mind. Now, he says that morality has nothing to do with thinking, because the simplest people can be very moral, whereas thinking people can be very immoral; and the light which morality needs is not thinking, properly speaking, but the conscience. And therefore the question is reduced to the question of the status of the conscience: is the conscience natural or not? If the conscience is natural, one reasoning will follow; if the conscience is not natural, then the enthusiasm for virtue would indeed not be natural. Now let us see whether we find any further In the next paragraph, I think, 371, paragraph 4.

Mr. Reinken: “Moreover, if a woman is quite unaccustomed to think, how can she bring up her children? How will she know what is good for them? How can she incline them to virtues of which she is ignorant, to merit of which she has no conception? She can only flatter or threaten, she can only make them insolent or timid; she will make them performing monkeys or noisy little rascals; she will never make them intelligent or pleasing children.”^{xxxvii}

LS: Literally, “never good minds nor amiable children.” Good *minds*: “*bons esprits*.” And here, that throws light on the conscience. Here you have a conscientious mother, as defined before. And qua conscientious mother, and only conscientious mother, she cannot produce anything but affected monkeys or—what was the other thing?—stupid, *étourdis poliçons*.

Student: “Noisy little rascals.”

LS: All right; that's it. In other words, the light which the conscience gives is very inadequate for education. The argument is not advanced in the sequel beyond this point, but I thought we should surely consider it. Now let us see how he goes on. A little bit later on page

^{xxxvii} E, 767-68; 591.

372, in the second paragraph, there is this remarkable overstatement of Rousseau—he is famous for that—“If extreme ugliness were not disgusting, I would prefer it to extreme beauty.”^{xxxviii} And the reason which he gives for it, because in a short time the one and the other becoming zero for the husband,^{xxxix} beauty becomes an inconvenience, because she makes the woman attractive to other men; and ugliness becomes an advantage, because she will not be desirable. So, this only because of its amusing character; it has been quoted by Brother Chrysostom in his paper. Now, let us turn to page 373 in the fourth paragraph. That is a very long paragraph, and I wonder whether we can afford to read it. Yes, I think we should read it.

Mr. Reinken: “Men say life is short, and I see them doing their best to shorten it. As they do not know how to spend their time they lament the swiftness of its flight, and I perceive that for them it goes only too slowly. Intent merely on the object of their pursuit, they behold unwillingly the space between them and it; one desires tomorrow, another looks a month ahead, another ten years beyond that. No one wants to live today, no one contents himself with the present hour, all complain that it passes slowly.”^{xl}

LS: I think we can leave it here; he develops it in a very sensible way. But it is not this general wisdom, it is the specific term which Rousseau gives to this general wisdom which is important. “No one wishes to live today.” To live today means fully to surrender to the present; to forget about the future; to forget about the past. That is the sentiment of existence to which he alludes here. This is his ultimate standard: the perfect moment. We will find other remarks to this effect later. We turn to page 374, bottom, the beginning of the paragraph.

Mr. Reinken: “To travel on foot is to travel in the fashion of Thales, Plato, and Pythagoras. I find it hard to understand how a philosopher can bring himself to travel in any other way; how he can tear himself from the study of the wealth which lies before his eyes and beneath his feet.”^{xli}

LS: Let us stop here. The only way of traveling is to travel like the philosophers traveled. How, has this any implication for the book? I mean, Emile also will travel that way; but that is not the most important implication. Here, he does not speak of the philosophers in a derogatory sense, which he has done so often. But these are not contemporary philosophers; these are the ancient philosophers. I think it implies that Rousseau himself regards himself as a philosopher. And that is—I believe there is some connection between his allusion to the sentiment of existence shortly made before.

Student: Also, he who runs may not read, cannot read.

LS: Yes; that has to do with it.

Student: Should it not be pushed through to Emile?

^{xxxviii} *E*, 769; 592.

^{xxxix} i.e. beauty is the same as plainness for the husband because “after six weeks, [beauty] is nothing more for the possessor.”

^{xl} *E*, 770; 593.

^{xli} *E*, 772; 595.

LS: No, no: Emile comes as close to a philosopher as a non-philosopher can, that we know. And I think it is no accident—although I haven’t reread it—that¹³ . . . in the original edition, Book 5 has two subdivisions: “Sophie, or the Woman”; and “Travels.” So, there is probably a connection with that.

Student: Excuse me; where does this division occur?

LS: Which?

Student: In this book, in the original.

LS: Well, I have a very common edition here. We have not yet reached that point. Is it marked in the translation?

Student: Yes.

LS: Very good.

Student: [Inaudible]

LS: Yes, we do not come yet . . . yes, there is a clear title here: *Les Voyages*. So now . . .

Student: Excuse me; could I just make one last [inaudible], something that interests me; something that occurred to me a long while ago. On 374, he says, “We do not travel like couriers but like explorers. We do not merely consider the beginning and the end, but the space between.”^{xlii} That reminded me very strongly of the passages right at the beginning of Book 2, I think, where he was talking about proceeding by touch,^{xliii} feeling your way, and not to go by . . .

LS: Yes, the spirit of empirical science. This goes through. You know, when he learns, when Emile learns the rudiments of physics, and everything; there should be nothing which is of any concern to him which he does not understand clearly and distinctly. That’s the same spirit which goes throughout.

Student: Yes, this throws a stronger connection with philosophy, the philosophical man.

LS: Oh, yes. Mr. Nicgorski.

Mr. Nicgorski: Small comment: wouldn’t one have expected the philosopher who is traveling to look at the heavens above; but instead he looks at what is below his feet.

^{xlii} *E*, 771; 594. While explorer is an acceptable translation of *voyageur*, the remainder of the passage considers not so much focused exploring as pleasurable, leisured travel, with, to be sure, time to contemplate whatever interests the traveler.

^{xliii} Not the beginning, but later on in Book 2 (*E*, 381-91; 273-81).

LS: Yes, sure. But to some extent, I believe, this would be implied. You remember, Emile learned very early to find his bearings by the heavenly bodies. Now, page 378, the last paragraph.

Mr. Reinken: “If I relate the plain and simple tale of their innocent affections you will accuse me of frivolity, but you will be mistaken. Sufficient attention is not given to the effect which the first connection between man and woman is bound to produce on the future life of both. People do not see that a first impression so vivid as that of love, or the liking which takes the place of love—”

LS: Which is an important qualification. “Puppy-love,” I believe they call it—does one not use the term “puppy-love” for the very first love at a very early age, which is not genuine love, and therefore he says “an inclination which takes the place of love.” But nevertheless it is a most powerful impression on the individuals concerned.

Mr. Reinken: “produces lasting effects whose influence continues till death. Works on education are crammed with wordy and unnecessary accounts of the imaginary duties of children; but there is not a word about the most important and most difficult part of their education, the crisis which forms the bridge between the child and the man. If any part of this work is really useful, it will be because I have dwelt at great length on this matter, so essential in itself and so neglected by other authors—”

LS: “by *all*” others. That is one of these statements about the meaning of the book by the author himself which must be, in a perfect reading, the beginning, you know? What does the author claim to have done in this book, what has not been done hitherto? In a humbler way you have it in every Doctor’s dissertation, you know—when the candidate is supposed to say what did you do in your thesis, and has this not been done by someone else—so that you all know what this is, only on a . . . but in principle the same question.

Mr. Reinken: “and because I have not allowed myself to be discouraged either by false delicacy or by the difficulties of expression.”^{xliv}

LS: That is all we need. I thought I should bring it in; and this shows, of course, the crucial significance of Books 4 and 5 in particular; because he doesn’t claim that he is the first to have written about infancy. Page 381, the second paragraph from the bottom.

Mr. Reinken: “My course is drawing to a close; the end is in view. All the chief difficulties are vanquished, the chief obstacles overcome; the hardest thing left to do is to refrain from spoiling my work by undue haste to complete it. Amid the uncertainty of human life, let us shun that false prudence which seeks to sacrifice the present to the future; what is, is too often sacrificed to what will never be.”^{xlv}

LS: You remember, this was the very beginning of the book to which he returns now. And on the next page, in the third paragraph.

^{xliv} E, 777; 599.

^{xlv} E, 781; 602.

Mr. Reinken: “Emile has not forgotten that we have something to return. As soon as the things are ready, we take horse and set off at a great pace, for on this occasion he is anxious to get there. When the heart opens the door to passion, it becomes conscious of the slow flight of time.”

LS: No, really: “of the ennui,” well, “of the boredom of life,” one can translate it.

Mr. Reinken: “If my time has not been wasted he will not spend his whole life like this.”^{xlvi}

LS: Now, this is a very important part of Rousseau’s analysis: passion and boredom belong together in this sense, that only to the extent to which we are capable of having passions are we bored: we are bored when we are not passionate. If we would reach a stage above the passions, we could no longer be bored. That is the sentiment of existence again; that’s the connection. On page 386, in the second paragraph.

Mr. Reinken: “‘Why,’ said I, trying to check him, and laughing in my turn at his impetuosity, ‘will this young head never grow any older? Having dabbled all your life in philosophy—’”^{xlvi}

LS: That is bad: “After having philosophized all your life,” and so on. Emile has philosophized—in his way—all his life; that’s the formula for Emile’s education. Yes. Well, we don’t need the rest; we have to make some selection. Page 389, in the second paragraph.

Mr. Reinken: “Women are no strangers to the art of thinking, but they should only skim the surface of logic and metaphysics.”

LS: No; does he say that? “women should only *effleurer*—what is that in English?—well, “slightly touch the sciences of reasoning,” unless there is something else in the different version. Is there nothing?

Student: I can’t find it.

LS: All right; go on.

Mr. Reinken: “Sophie understands readily, but she soon forgets. She makes most progress in the moral sciences and aesthetics—”

LS: “in morals and in the things of taste.” The term “aesthetics” did not yet exist, if I remember well, at that time.

Mr. Reinken: “as to physical science she retains some vague idea of the general laws and and order of this world.”

LS: “of the system of the world.” Well, almost everything she changes.

^{xlvi} *E*, 782-83; 604.

^{xlvi} *E*, 787; 607-8.

Student: What does he mean “physical sciences”?

LS: Physics; he says physics. No, I mean, she takes her vocabulary from the *Announcements* of the University of Chicago, I believe. Yes.

Mr. Reinken: “Sometimes in the course of their walks, the spectacle of the wonders of nature bids them not fear to raise their pure and innocent hearts to nature’s God—”

LS: Literally, “to its author”; but of course that doesn’t affect [the meaning]

Mr. Reinken: “they are not afraid of His presence, and they pour out their hearts before him.”^{xlvi}

LS: Yes; [we look at this] only because this is another reference to the difference between the two sexes regarding intellectuality. You see, the inferiority of the female sex is here politely admitted. Let us turn now to page 392, paragraph 4.

Mr. Reinken: “I have already shown how this passion of jealousy in matters of convention finds its way into the heart of man. In love it is another matter; then jealousy is so near akin to nature, that it is hard to believe that it is not her work; and the example of the very beasts, many of whom are madly jealous, seems to prove this point beyond reply. Is it man’s influence that has taught cocks to tear each other to pieces or bulls to fight to the death?”^{xli}

LS: Now, this is a great question again which we had before already in the *Second Discourse*, as he will show shortly after: is jealousy natural? Taking jealousy, of course, as one example of the human passions, to what extent are the passions natural? Now, the next paragraph.

Mr. Reinken: “No one can deny that the aversion to everything which may disturb or interfere with our pleasures is a natural impulse. Up to a certain point the desire for the exclusive possession of that which ministers to our pleasure is in the same case. But when this desire has become a passion, when it is transformed into madness, or into a bitter and suspicious fancy known as jealousy, that is quite another matter; such a passion may be natural or it may not; we must distinguish between these different cases.”¹

LS: Now, let us first see. So, for example, that someone should be angry if his food is taken away from him, that’s natural; and even if he is not hungry at the moment—he has it only for the next day—it is equally natural. And we can enlarge that. So, whenever men are thwarted, they are naturally angry; but this being thwarted is one thing, and jealousy—especially in its extremest forms—is another. Now, Rousseau feels he cannot answer this question without answering the connected question: is the attachment to a single woman natural? More specifically, is monogamy natural? Let us read page 393, the third paragraph.

^{xlvi} *E*, 791-92| 611.

^{xli} *E*, 796; 615.

¹ *E*, 796; 615.

Mr. Reinken: “Now consider the human species in its primitive simplicity; it is easy to see, from the limited powers of the male, and the moderation of his desires, that nature meant him to be content with one female; this is confirmed by the numerical equality of the two sexes, at any rate in our part of the world—”^{li}

LS: Yes; I think that is not difficult to understand.

Mr. Reinken: “an equality which does not exist in anything like the same degree among those species in which several females are collected around one male. Though a man does not brood like a pigeon, and though he has no milk to suckle the young, and must in this respect be classed with the quadrupeds, his children are feeble and helpless for so long a time, that mother and children could ill dispense with the father's affection, and the care which results from it.”^{lii}

LS: Now, what does this amount to, then? Is monogamy natural? In a general way, yes, he says here. He makes an important exception: “at least in our climates.” If there would be a great difference between the number of females and males, then it would be different; this he makes clear. Now, let us turn to page 394, in the second paragraph.

Mr. Reinken: “True love is another matter. I have shown, in the work already referred to—”

LS: Which is that?

Student: *The Discourse on Inequality*.

LS: Which we have read. Yes.

Mr. Reinken: “that this sentiment is not so natural as men think, and that there is a great difference between the gentle habit which binds a man with cords of love to his helpmeet, and the unbridled passion which is intoxicated by the fancied charms of an object which he no longer sees in its true light. This passion which is full of exclusions and preferences, only differs from vanity in this respect, that vanity demands all and gives nothing, so that it is always harmful, while love, bestowing as much as it demands, is in itself a sentiment full of equity.”^{liii}

LS: And so on. And then he shows, furthermore, the element of delusion which comes in. So, is love natural, then? I mean, monogamy seems to be in a way natural, within certain limitations. Is love natural? What we ordinarily understand by love, passionate love, is *not*. And the question arises, in this whole section—he refers to the *Second Discourse*, partly for things which he had already said in the *Emile*. That's very strange: he doesn't quote his earlier writings too frequently [inaudible]. No, I believe a reading of the *Emile* would show a much more radical criticism of love and monogamy. There is especially, in a long note to the *Second Discourse*, a critique of Locke's *Second Treatise*^{liv}, and what Locke said there about the conjugal society, where he goes extremely far. Locke, of course, taught the natural monogamy of the human race; but he didn't

^{li} “in our climates.”

^{lii} *E*, 797;616.

^{liii} *E*, 798;617.

^{liv} *SD*, 208-14; 86-90.

go beyond that because of the long time of human infancy, that the bond of father and mother must be more firm and lasting than in any other animal species. He didn't say, of course, it is absolutely firm and absolutely lasting, but more firm. And Rousseau criticizes exactly this point, and denies the natural character of marriage. I believe that is the reason of this allusion here.

Student: In this case now, is it that you take the latest statement as being the most solid statement?

LS: Not quite, because the reference back would seem to say that in this particular point he still agrees. He still agrees; otherwise he wouldn't quote it. I think no one I mean, there are people who think it is very necessary, if they change their mind, to indicate in every point, in my former writing I said this, and that is wrong—which one could take to be a kind of displaying of oneself, and apparently Rousseau had this feeling, too. So Rousseau, in quite a few points, changes the earlier view, and I think simply trusting the intelligence of the reader who would not believe that the more primitive statement, the more elementary statement can have the authority of the more advanced statement. But precisely for this reason, when he refers here back to the *Second Discourse*, this would mean to say, in this point I still agree with it. In other words, he does no longer agree with the simplistic statement about compassion occurring in the *Second Discourse*, but he agrees fundamentally with the teaching of the *Second Discourse* regarding jealousy, love, monogamy. That I would take this is my interpretation of that.

Student: But the reason I raised the question is that it is my impression that in the specific point about monogamous marriage in the *Second Discourse*, Rousseau had a different position from what he gives here.

LS: Yes, but if he quotes it here, if he quotes the *Second Discourse* in this context, I would say he regards the statements in the *Second Discourse*, which are much more elaborate, still as substantially correct,¹⁴ especially this long criticism of Locke in that note. Now a few more passages; page 395, bottom.

Mr. Reinken: “Most of the habits you think you have instilled into children and young people are not really habits at all; they have only been acquired under compulsion, and being followed reluctantly they will be cast off at the first opportunity. However long you remain in prison you never get a taste for prison life; so aversion is increased rather than diminished by habit. Not so with Emile; as a child he only did what he could do willingly and with pleasure, and as a man he will do the same, and the force of habit will only lend its help to the joys of freedom. An active life, bodily labour, exercise, movement, have become so essential to him that he could not relinquish them without suffering. Reduce him all at once to a soft and sedentary life and you condemn him to chains and imprisonment, you keep him in a condition of thralldom and constraint; he would suffer, no doubt, both in health and temper. He can scarcely breathe in a stuffy room, he requires open air, movement, fatigue. Even at Sophie's feet he cannot help casting a glance at the country and longing to explore it in her company. Yet he remains if he must; but he is anxious and ill at ease; he seems to be struggling with himself; he remains because he is a captive.”

LS: “He is in chains”; “in the irons,” literally.

Mr. Reinken: “‘Yes,’ you will say, ‘these are necessities to which you have subjected him, a yoke which you have laid upon him.’ You speak truly, I have subjected him to the yoke of manhood.”^{lv}

LS: That is a very interesting statement, the complicated nature of freedom. So, he Needless to say that Emile *likes* to be, to stay with Sophie, although the author does not say here, because . . . you know this much, all of you, at least from the literature, to know that this is the case. So, in other words, there is a difference between being in chains gladly and not gladly. Now, let us apply this to In other words, even if it is true that men¹⁵ prefer civil society to the state of nature, this would be compatible with the fact that civil society is a state of chains¹⁶. But what does he say here about the infancy of Emile, where he did everything gladly and with pleasure? This is true, but is there not also something else, too, which we have heard about the education of Emile? The most general statement

Student: Force and guile.

LS: Yes; he was kept there, guided by force and guile, of which he was to some extent unaware—of the guile he was wholly unaware, and of the force he was not fully aware. So, that goes together. That’s a complicated thing, freedom. I believe that is very important.

Student: Rousseau says that he has made him fit for every condition among men, but the one thing that *Emile* cannot become, his chains make it impossible for him to be a . . . well, an intellectual, let alone a philosopher.

LS: No, an intellectual, that would not be desirable from Rousseau’s point of view, I would say; but the philosopher Yes, but that is impossible for him, that is—but I think one can say what Rousseau indicates here, man is always in chains; always. I mean, only . . . either the chains are gladly borne or they are not gladly borne, but they are still chains. And the only freedom is this here [blackboard], the sentiment of existence, where neither the future nor the past act as a frame, where man is fully satisfied with the present.

Student: Isn’t it interesting, though, that the close development of the sentiment of existence in the Fifth Reverie also includes then the thought where he says, I would be happy even in the *donjons*, even in the Bastille?^{lvi}

LS: Yes; because that is true freedom.

Student: [Inaudible] then slavery is wanting, is that the idea?—because I am willing to accept being there.

LS: Because in I mean, here Rousseau, in a way, returns to the Stoic teaching at this point, that it doesn’t make any difference whether you are a slave or a freeman if you are a sage. Only Rousseau’s wisdom is defined more in terms of the sentiment of existence than of insight. More;

^{lv} *E*, 800-801; 619.

^{lvi} Rousseau, 2000, 47.

the insight is also there; but the peculiarity is that. We need two more passages, I believe. On page 399 in the second paragraph.

Mr. Reinken: “Sometimes his steps are turned in the direction of the happy abode; he may hope to see Sophie without her knowing, to see her out walking without being seen. But Emile is always quite open in every thing he does; he neither can nor would deceive. His delicacy is of that pleasing type in which pride rests on the foundation of a good conscience.”^{lvii}

LS: Well, that is not We must not say so much: “He has still that amiable delicacy which flatters and nourishes the *amour-propre* of the good testimony about oneself.” You see, here we have clearly *amour-propre* as a virtue, or as the root of virtue again. There is one more passage to which I would like to call your attention; that is on page 404, in the fourth paragraph.

Mr. Reinken: That’s next time’s [reading].

LS: Pardon? All right, let us not be too strict. I mean, let us disregard these conventional chains. Perhaps Because next time we have many other things to discuss. Are you willing to read something which belongs to the next assignment?

Mr. Reinken: Oh, certainly.

LS: I thought you might have accepted convention as a natural role.

Mr. Reinken: “That was all I said. But before any one could speak Emile, approaching Sophie, raised his voice and said with greater firmness than I expected, ‘Sophie, my fate is in your hands, as you very well know. You may condemn me to die of grief; but do not hope to make me forget the rights of humanity; they are even more sacred in my eyes than your own rights; I will never renounce them for you.’”^{lviii}

LS: And of course this settles it completely. I mean, that settles his fate completely in his favor, that there is something regarding which he will not make any concessions to Sophie. Now, [let’s consider] only the word, the term, “the rights of humanity”—that is the rights of man, but here it has a slightly different meaning: those rights, the rights of humanity in the sense also [of] the rights which others have, the claims which others have on one on the grounds of humanity. But the phrase is still, I think, quite remarkable; I would say offhand—subject to revision—that this term comes up in the eighteenth century, just as the rights of man make their appearance there. In other words, the tendency to understand duty in terms of the rights which others have on oneself: all duty is social duty; otherwise this would not make sense. And when later on people said there is All duties are correlative—where there is a right there must be a duty, and vice versa—this is of course only true if all duties are social duties.^{lix} Otherwise it wouldn’t be true. Even under that condition, it would not necessarily be true; for example, if someone has the duty of gratitude, there does not necessarily follow a right on the part of the individual to whom he owes

^{lvii} *E*, 8-5-806; 623.

^{lviii} *E*, 812-13; 629.

^{lix} Emile, however, recognizes as first his duty to himself (*E*, 544;406).

gratitude to demand it from the other. But in the duties of justice in the narrower sense, this is certainly true. Mr. Seltzer?

Mr. Seltzer: It's interesting that Emile . . . Sophie was first attracted to Emile when he wept at the plight of her family, in other words, expressed compassion. And here again when he expresses compassion towards the people that . . . the man that broke a leg . . .

LS: Poor people, yes.

Mr. Seltzer: that he meets in the field . . . Again compassion. And this is what decides her, that she wants him in the last. . .

LS: Oh, no; there is no question that this goes through Rousseau.

Mr. Seltzer: This is what makes her say, take my hand; it is yours.

LS: Yes. No, compassion is taken as an almost unmistakable sign of goodness—goodness here understood as a feeling heart; that, one can safely say, is a very characteristic thing of the eighteenth century, especially of the second half. A good man is a compassionate man, and vice versa. This was a very powerful tendency there, and, well, Burke has expressed it very neatly in the *Reflections on the Revolution of France*—if I remember well, or in a later writing about the French Revolution—that¹⁷ he distinguishes two kinds of virtues: these softer feelings and virtues, and the sterner virtues.^{lx} Now, the sterner virtues were pushed back in favor of these softer virtues. And the name was *humanité*, humanity, which, if I remember well, in Thomas' *Summa*—I do not know whether this goes back to older sources—humanity is defined as a virtue in the relation of man to people inferior to him^{lxi}. I mean, for example, humanity is not a virtue regulating the relation between man and other men superior to him or equal to him—well, not in every respect. For example, there is a story . . . No, this story is something different. But humanity . . . I mean, for example the man may be very superior to you but he may be sick: in that respect inferior. Now, in the extreme form, the feelings for the underdog; the virtues, virtue regulating man's relation to the underdog, this became the preponderant feeling. And therefore all these reforms, prison reform, and whatever else they had begun at that time, that all was there. But it is also true that this pushing back of the sterner virtues has been retained by the same school of Western thought. There is a passage in Montesquieu, in the *Spirit of the Laws*, in one of the books on commerce—I don't know which of the two at the moment—where he speaks of commerce—the old theme of Plato and Aristotle, that commerce corrupts the manners—intercourse with strangers having other customs, and all this kind of thing. And Montesquieu accepts that, that commerce does harm to the purity of manners, that he retains; but he says on the other hand, commerce—and this very thing which makes for impurity of manners—makes

^{lx} In a letter to M. de Rivarol (June 1, 1791), Burke decries the substitution of humanity or benevolence for the class of virtues that restrain the appetite. In an earlier work, "A Philosophical Enquiry into the Origin of our Ideas of the Sublime and the Beautiful" (1757), Burke had distinguished sublime virtues, like fortitude, from softer virtues, like liberality (Part 3, Section 10).

^{lxi} See *Summa* 2.2.q31, a2: "beneficence is an effect of love in so far as love moves the superior to watch over the inferior."

for goodness of manners.^{lxii} This, I think, is a very beautiful formula of what happened, and is identical with Burke's diagnosis of what happened. And Rousseau plays here a somewhat He is, of course, *the* prophet of compassion, humanity; and at the same time, [there is] the constant reference to the heroes of Plutarch, the Spartan-Roman ingredient; and it is so hard It is one of the confusing things in Rousseau: where does he really stand? Because surely in Rome and Sparta, we wouldn't find this kind of thing. And yet he was Both things are in him. Rabbi Weiss.

Rabbi Weiss: I was wondering about the connection of this to conscience, and whether the rights of man, or rather, whether the notion that duties are derivative from the rights of man doesn't have to be modified somehow, to bring in the primacy of conscience. That is, I had thought of duties [as] being derivative first from conscience, which I know is connected with other men, but somehow, in other words, stemming from within, and not . . . stemming from within primarily, and not stemming from the rights of others primarily.

LS: I do not believe there is a direct connection between the two issues. I think No, it is so. I mean, that there is such a shift from duties to rights, I believe that can easily be shown. This is one thing; and the other thing is surely the Conscience is much more frequently mentioned, say, in Rousseau, than it would be in an earlier age. Why? Not that conscience was not known and spoken about, but if you take the Thomistic teaching, in the Thomistic teaching, Thomas makes the distinction between the primary awareness of moral principles, which he calls *synderesis*—a word which has disappeared from usage—and conscience. The conscience, we can say roughly—but you must correct me, Rabbi Weiss—the conscience is the application of what the *synderesis* says to a particular case—did I act rightly now?—approving, disapproving, whatever it may be.^{lxiii} Now, the interesting thing is that this practical part of the whole consisting of *synderesis* and conscience becomes emancipated—do you see?—I mean, the conscience remains without the *synderesis*—that's what one could say—and therefore new theories of the conscience are required. The practical meaning is that the conscience, as it is here used by Rousseau,¹⁸ means that all men, if they only would take the trouble, would not surrender to the passions, would be as good judges of what is right and wrong, as good as any other. That, I believe, is the crucial [thing]; whereas in the older view, there was always a great difference between children and mature people, and between wise and unwise people. When people speak of the conscience in the eighteenth century, this distinction is out. That, I believe, is the crucial point.

So, there is a connection, I am sure, between the two things; but they are not identical. The most extraordinary case which I remember is this: when Kant discusses, in his *Foundation of the Metaphysics of Morals*, a case: a father has received a deposit from someone else, and this other man traveled, to other continents probably, and when he comes back he has to give it to him. In the meantime, his family falls into misery—well, the mother becomes ill, I believe that's the point—and there is a doctor. They don't have money; and then the father is tempted to dip into that deposit. And Kant says—I am speaking from memory; it may not be quite exact, but it amounts in substance to this—¹⁹Kant says that even a child of ten years would know perfectly well that under no circumstances can this be done; in other words, that this case, that is, I mean, a

^{lxii} Montesquieu, 1989, book 20, Chapter 1, p. 338.

^{lxiii} *Summa*, 1a79.12-13.

difficult case even for a grown up person, could be decided by any sane girl of ten years old.^{lxiv} Well, Kant did not reproduce this statement in his more mature writings, but it is characteristic: the conscience does not require experience. If you take the Rousseauan statements, that in every . . . Well, of course it is not there in a baby in the cradle, but very soon after; that [conscience] is an infallible guide, and distinguished from reason. You have seen that Rousseau ordinarily uses conscience in contradistinction to reason, meaning the reasoning process, the considering of the circumstances, does not enter. This, I believe, is the point. In other words, if I may remind you of the schema I gave in my last lecture, this has, I think, to do with the geometrization of the conscience . . . of natural right. First of all, the geometrization means that the conclusions from the principles, however low, are equally universal as principles themselves. Therefore you can treat natural law *more geometrico*. That is the first step. And the second step is in a way a rebellion against this first step: you do not have to be a geometrician of ethics, you do not have to be a studier of the natural law, as Locke calls it. Everyone knows that, because we have in us something which gives us infallible guidance, and the trouble only is that we don't listen to it. I mean, we follow our passions without reflecting for one moment. A moment's reminder of our duty would be sufficient to give us perfect clarity—and not in such simple cases as should I steal money in order to buy drugs and other relatively simple cases, but in such a complicated case where it might really be defensible for that father to do what he has no reasonable doubt his friend would do when he was there, to take out some money in order to save his wife—and surely the child of ten years would be completely unable to judge of that, because she would naturally say that the life of her mother is infinitely more valuable for the family: think of all the implications which the death of a mother can have. A little bit of reflection shows how impossible the view is which Kant had there.

Student: In the view of Rousseau, does the conscience not only judge but also obligate one to do a certain act?

LS: Yes, sure.

Student: Well, then the duties—

LS: No, these are two different considerations. The consideration would be roughly this—especially considering the connection between duty, as Rousseau understands it, and compassion, the simple natural feeling of compassion. If you only remember it, and do not follow²⁰, say, your greed, [so] that you take away from another something to which you have a legal right, and have no feeling for the sufferings which you inflict—the simple compassion would already act, counteract the self-assertion; and needless to say . . . But I do not believe that the teaching regarding the conscience which Rousseau uses throughout his book belongs, from his own point of view, to the center of his teaching, as you can see from²¹ what he says, in the first part of the fourth book,²² compassion is not good enough; it must be generalized, as he puts it, you remember? This is, of course, no longer . . . i.e. you see some poor fellow who is fettered and brought into jail, and you have compassion with him, and if you could you would unfetter him and set him free, and do not consider that he is a murderer and might commit²³ more

^{lxiv} Kant, "On the Old Saw: That May Be Right in Theory but it Won't Work in Practice," trans. E. B. Ashton (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1974), 286. At least this seems the right example, though Strauss attributes it to "Foundations." "Old Saw" was published late in Kant's career.

murders; that is . . . generalized compassion would, of course, say, you have compassion, I mean, observe compassion more toward innocent people rather than of criminals, and so on. But mere compassion wouldn't be enough.

Student: Would it be right to say, then, that compassion is generalized because of your consideration of the rights of other men, and in that sense it is. . . ?

LS: Yes, but this is a process. I mean; this is not compatible with conscience as the sublime science of the simple soul, i.e. where one man is as good a judge as everybody else. This generalization is not a thing which everyone can do.

Student: Do you derive your notion of the rights of man from generalizing compassion?

LS: No, no. That would not be true. The rights of man are derived from the fundamental right, the right of self-preservation *by* a process of generalization. In other words, fundamentally the reasoning of Hobbes. Good; so, we shall not meet Thursday . . .

END OF LECTURE

¹ Deleted "and."

² Deleted "Julie's."

³ Deleted "Julie."

⁴ Deleted "is an."

⁵ Deleted "Matron's and."

⁶ Deleted "but."

⁷ Deleted "you have right."

⁸ Deleted "the."

⁹ Deleted "regarding."

¹⁰ Deleted "than."

¹¹ Deleted "does."

¹² Deleted "mean."

¹³ Deleted "the last."

¹⁴ Deleted "and in other words."

¹⁵ Deleted "like."

¹⁶ Deleted "would be compatible."

¹⁷ Deleted "there were two."

¹⁸ Deleted “is.”

¹⁹ Deleted “and.”

²⁰ Deleted “your.”

²¹ Deleted “the fact.”

²² Deleted “the.”

²³ Deleted “any.”

Session 16

Leo Strauss: All right. Mr. Boyan wants to read next time. But there is one point: how can I be certain that you will not be influenced by today's meeting? So, you may read it next time, and I will keep it. You remind me that you read next time.

Now, first, Mr. Butterworthⁱ, you have raised, of course, extremely interesting questions which it would not be practical to discuss now, but perhaps they come up while we go, you know, and then we don't have to find with great difficulty the relevant passages. Therefore I will postpone a discussion of the whole question of virtue and goodness, as well as of the question of the relation of the summary of the *Social Contract* to the *Social Contract* itself, which are two very important issues.

Now I would like to say only one point regarding the latter thing: that in a summary, everyone would of course omit many things which occur in the complete statement; therefore, it is only. . . it would give a greatly deceptive impression of the original. In other words, if any one of us trying to write a summary of the *Social Contract* on, say, ten pages instead of 100 pages, would considerably differ from Rousseau; then the question would arise. And the second point: there are certain subjects of utmost importance which are omitted, but one can also [inaudible] raise the question, were these subjects not already dealt with in the *Emile* before?

Mr. Butterworth: Just one thing. The disjunction which I see there is, first of all, there is a difference between giving a summary and thus remaining faithful to the text; even though you can't bring in all the points in the original text, you don't bring in any points that weren't in the original text, which I believe that I can find—

LS: Yes, but the question would then be, are these points necessary to bring in in a summary? Because in a complete statement they would be somehow understood on the basis of the earlier developments. We will take this up; it is of no use to discuss it in general. I am grateful to you that you emphasize this question.

One very minor point regarding virtues: I think the ordinary derivation of the Latin word "virtue" is from *vir*, man.

Mr. Butterworth: I said that.

LS: Yes, but you said something of *vis*; whether there is any connection

Mr. Butterworth: I don't think I made myself understood; I meant to say *vir*.

LS: Very good. Now, I did not quite understand what the result of your comparison between *Emile* and Rousseau was. I mean, you started from the obvious fact that they are very different;

ⁱ Author of a seminar paper for this session.

and then you opened this whole question of virtue and goodness, and the question of the relation of the *Social Contract* to the summary, and then . . . are they identical, or are they not?

Mr. Butterworth: In the end, I maintain, because of the disjunction of this last dialogue, that Emile is relegated to a different position

LS: Well, that he always was.

Mr. Butterworth: Except that the virtue offered to him, and the happiness offered to him in the first discussion, was [inaudible] in keeping with Rousseau's

LS: I see. In other words, the end is the maximum approximation of Emile to Rousseau; greater than the approximation achieved before.

Mr. Butterworth: No, that's not what I meant to say. The first discussion of virtue and happiness would be an almost complete identity of Emile and Rousseau, with certain points which are [inaudible]; but at the end, after they [inaudible] to the government, Rousseau now relegates him to an entirely different type of happiness and type of position.ⁱⁱ

LS: I see; I could not follow the bulk of the argument. One more point: when you say he differs from Descartes in so far as he suggests inaction in the case of doubt. Why is this different in Descartes?

Mr. Butterworth: Descartes says specifically in the *Discourse on Method*, and I think also in the *Meditations*, that in order not to remain in a state of inaction, I'm going to give myself rules of conduct while I am in doubt.ⁱⁱⁱ

LS: Yes, but the more specific thing where he gives this rule is when you are in the midst of a forest; and then he says, you can't possibly stay there, and then the only safe thing is not to go a few steps in this direction then that direction, but choose arbitrarily one direction and follow it, because you can be sure sooner or later you will get out of the forest^{iv}—which is a commonsensical proposal, which Rousseau surely would also have accepted. The key point, I think, is the same, because in the chapter on error in the Fourth Meditation, that is exactly the rule: when we do not *know*, when we do not have clear and distinct judgment, suspend judgment.^v If you ascend when you do not have clear and distinct judgment, then you follow the dangerous inclination of the will, which is infinite, to ascend beyond the sphere of clear and distinct knowledge. I do not see the difference here.

ⁱⁱ I believe Butterworth means by the first dialogue the one that takes place when it's determined that Emile must leave Sophie for a time. In that dialogue, the thrust is Stoic—Emile must treat even the prospect of Sophie's death with equanimity (*E*, 814-820; 630-38). In the dialogue after Emile has studied politics, on the other hand, Emile is discouraged from excessive detachment (*E*, 855-60; 665-69). [Ed.]

ⁱⁱⁱ Descartes, 1998, 13-16. I am not sure what Butterworth has in mind in the *Meditations*. [Ed.]

^{iv} Descartes, 1998, 14.

^v Descartes, 1998, 85.

The last point: what you said at the beginning was very helpful: you emphasized the narrative character of our assignment today. But the only correction needed is that this applies to the fifth book altogether. The fifth book is the most narrative book, I think; and very naturally, because it is a love affair, a love affair, of sorts. And therefore it is a kind of novel¹ and that's, of course—a novel is naturally narrative. And I think the first four books² have narrative enclosures, but are not strictly speaking narrative. And needless to say,³ Rousseau had written a novel dealing with the subject of love—*Julie, or the New Heloise*. And I believe for a full understanding of Book 5, one would have to read the novel, where a love affair in civil society is discussed, which is somewhat different. I mean, [the love affair does] not [take place] under such wonderful conditions, where Rousseau, this wonderful tutor, and these marvelous parents *arranged* the love affair. There it has been unarranged, and led to quite disastrous consequences.

Mr. Butterworth: May I say something about this idea of error in Descartes as a contrast to Rousseau? I wasn't thinking then, but simply this idea that it seems to me that Rousseau is saying in the *Emile*, in complete distinction, in contradiction almost, to what he says in the *Reveries*,⁴ [namely] let's just stop and stand still until we get an inclination of which way we should go; because nature will put us on the right path.^{vi}

LS: Yes, but I do not believe that, for example, that say, if the house is burning, and they are in the middle of the house, Rousseau would say "if we don't know which window is the most convenient for jumping out, let us first examine all the windows."

Mr. Butterworth: No, but that's not really a fair—

LS: That's a fair comparison, because what Descartes has in mind is decisions when decisions are absolutely necessary—that is the question of the *Discourse on Method*: he knows nothing, absolutely nothing; universal doubt. And the only thing he knows is that he must reach clarity, that he knows. But in the mean time he must live; and he doesn't know anything, for example, how, whether he should be just or unjust, or what have you; nothing. But he knows he must live in order to find clarity. And there he develops a provisional morality for this purpose, based on the premise of his ignorance; and in this connection he gives this rule. He gives as well, as a rule, too, about the customs of the country; that is a part of it. I really believe you overstated the importance of this remark here in the *Emile*. Now, let us begin, then, with our coherent reading, if it is all right. First, turn to page 406, the second paragraph.

Mr. Reinken: "We must be happy, dear Emile; it is the end of every feeling creature; it is the first desire taught us by nature, and the only one which never leaves us. But where is happiness? Who knows?"

LS: "Who knows it?" namely, happiness.

^{vi} As Strauss will reveal shortly, this dispute concerns a line in the reading for the session, "So long as we do not know what to do, wisdom consists in doing nothing." This claim, in Butterworth's view, contradicts a claim Rousseau makes in the Third Walk of the *Reveries* that doubt is an unsustainable condition (2000, 25).

Mr. Reinken: ““Every one seeks it, and no one finds it. We spend our lives in the search and we die before the end is attained. My young friend, when I took you, a new-born infant, in my arms, and called God himself to witness—””

LS: “the highest being,” *être suprême*; French Revolution. No, this is quite interesting; we have not considered carefully this usage, but I think that would not be entirely uninteresting: who speaks when of God and when of the *être supreme*?

Mr. Reinken: “witness to the vow I dared to make that I would devote my life to the happiness of your life, did I know myself what I was undertaking? No; I only knew that in making you happy, I was sure of my own happiness. By making this useful inquiry on your account, I make it for us both. So long as we do not know what to do, wisdom consists in doing nothing.”

LS: Here is your passage. Yes, it does have an important meaning, I admit it now—I remember now—but slightly different. Yes.

Mr. Reinken: “Of all rules there is none so greatly needed by man, and none which he is less able to obey. In seeking happiness when we know not where it is, we are perhaps getting further and further from it, we are running as many risks as there are roads to choose from. But it is not every one that can keep still. Our passion for our own well-being makes us so uneasy, that we would rather deceive ourselves in the search for happiness than sit still and do nothing; and when once we have left the place where we might have known happiness, we can never return.”^{vii}

LS: Yes, this is what I mean. Now, to what phenomenon does he refer here? I mean, this is obviously an entirely different situation from that in the burning house. In other words, there you know in a crude way that it is good to be out of the house. But if you do not know what the highest good is, just to be active for activity’s sake might remove you from it. Just stop. But what is here Not all men can cease acting; that is very difficult to stop acting. But what is Rousseau’s answer to this question, ultimately, the question of happiness? I mean, namely, it is important that he does not say this to him here; that reveals his relation to Emile. What is the state of highest bliss, according to Rousseau?

Student: To stand on the edge of, the banks of a lake.

LS: Yes, that is . . . you can also have it otherwise, I suppose; but he has a so-to-speak technical term for that.

Student: Well, the sweet sentiment of existence.

LS: Exactly. And that is incompatible with activity. And he doesn’t disclose it. In other words, Rousseau knows what happiness is; and Emile of course does not know what happiness is, in the highest sense. And it is very characteristic that he does not disclose it to Emile: this sphere is beyond the reach of Emile. Mr. Mueller.

^{vii} *E*, 814-15; 630-631.

Mr. Mueller: I don't want to be frivolous, but is that the same as Lucretius sitting on the shore and watching the boat sinking?^{viii}

LS: No, no. Yes, that has, of course, a certain kinship, but the general point is, the theoretical life and the practical life. Only in Rousseau, the theoretical life is in a way replaced by the sentiment of existence.

Student: Wouldn't Rousseau sort of break down in tears at that sentiment?

LS: Yes, sure; I mean, that is the point. But he is not It is some *sentiment* of existence⁵. And that has infinite consequences, namely this, to mention only this point regarding the difference between the traditional notion of contemplation and Rousseau's "contemplation": for the classical view, in which the Epicureans to *some* extent share, the object of contemplation is *the* truth, and *the* truth is *the* most common good. [It is] the most common good, which doesn't mean that it is *actually* shared by all men, but in itself it is the most common good. It is something radically non-private; it cannot possibly belong to any individual, to any nation, or so. It is *the* common good. Now, Rousseau's common good is emphatically private; namely, the sentiment of existence, which is rooted in *my* feeling of my existence. It is radically private, and that is the deepest reason for Rousseau's so-called individualism. In the highest respect, the highest good is a private good, whereas in the traditional view the highest good is in itself the common good. That it is not in fact common, shared by all men, is doubtless true, but that is another consideration. Therefore I think the difference between Lucretius and Rousseau is fundamentally the same; fundamentally, I mean, not merely regarding this particular passage.

Student: [Inaudible] but it makes one think, too, of Lucretius, made me think, on the terrors of Venus.^{ix} I think you spoke of that before, did you not, of the tragic nature of

LS: Yes, that is another matter. That is not directly connected.

Student: One question about this common good, where Rousseau is opposed to the old view, traditional view: isn't it also important that contemplation is somehow connected with thinking?

LS: Yes, very true.

Student: This is part of the reason why I don't see

LS: No, but thinking is not completely excluded by Rousseau. You see, I mean, just as, if you take the classical view literally, there is thinking in the sense of reasoning: *ratio ratiocinans*; reasoning leads up to the insight, to the *intellectus* in contradistinction to the *rationis*. To that extent Rousseau also admits the necessity of reasoning; but—the culmination is pure insight—but in Rousseau's pure insight, this insight is more, has more the character of a sentiment than of an insight. This remains.

[Inaudible exchange]

^{viii} Lucretius, 1994, 38

^{ix} Lucretius, 1994, 121-22.

LS: Oh, yes, there is no question about that. But still, the kinship between Rousseau's The fact that Rousseau needed, as it were, a substitute for contemplation, whereas his predecessors, Hobbes and Locke, thought one doesn't need it, is of the utmost importance. I mean, it shows that Rousseau really was in this respect broader; and the very great effect he had on people like Kant and Goethe can only be understood by this breadth, which was his peculiarity of the eighteenth century writers. I mean, that Rousseau was not a very likable man is another matter, but he was surely a genius of the very first order; we cannot deny that. Now, let us turn to the next paragraph: "'With the same ignorance'"

Mr. Reinken: "'In ignorance like this I tried to avoid a similar fault. When I took charge of you I decided to take no useless steps and to prevent you from doing so too. I kept to the path of nature, until she should show me the path of happiness. And lo! their paths were the same, and without knowing it this was the path I trod.'"^x

LS: In other words, Rousseau says here, presents here, [that] he doesn't know what happiness is; in fact he knows it. But one thing becomes clear: there is a connection between nature and happiness, and that amounts . . . in the most radical sense is mediated by the sentiment of existence. Now, let us continue. On 407 in the third paragraph.

Student: Excuse me; can I ask something in a point on page 406? It does seem to me that this, of all the remarks [inaudible] not that there are sort of two points of view being put through the *Emile*; but this is one of the most radically anti-political statements. . . .

LS: Which one? Which we read, or what follows?

Student: That paragraph: "'So long as we don't know what to do, wisdom consists in doing nothing.'"

LS: Oh, yes, very good; that is exactly the point. I may have made it in this class, but I have made it more than once. You see: sentiment of existence—no, let us begin at the beginning [LS writes on the blackboard]: self-preservation. Self-preservation leads to the city, that we all know now—the police force. But now, Rousseau makes a reflection and says, self-preservation cannot be *the* beginning, because it presupposes that life is good; if life is good, self-preservation becomes good. How do we know that life is good? And Rousseau says, we know it from experience, and not from a general vague experience of a cocktail party and similar events, but from⁶ when we face life as life; and that is the sentiment of existence. And therefore the highest principle is the sentiment of existence—for certain reasons I put it here. And now we see this: this sentiment of existence is incompatible with activity, but it necessarily leads to activity, because when we are out of that state, its effect, love of life, leads to activity in order to preserve life, an activity culminating in political activity. But since *this* is in itself incompatible with activity, it is *the* root of Rousseau's reservation against the whole moral-political sphere—is this clear? I mean, there is no doubt about this; it is the highest principle at which we arrive in analyzing Rousseau's thought. Mr. Reinken.

^x E, 815; 631.

Mr. Reinken: I would like to make my point under a particular form. It would seem that Rousseau's maxim to himself about sitting still and not leaving the place where happiness can be, if you take a famous Biblical injunction, strike the last word,⁷ you have Rousseau himself.

LS: Namely?

Mr Reinken: "Be still and know that I am God."^{xi} Rousseau just doesn't carry it that far. But there is something similar in the moral discipline and his enjoyment of the sentiment of existence, which, as we said before, is something like mystical theology.

LS: Yes, you said this before, you remember, at the beginning of this course. There is no question. But it is of course only similar.

Mr. Reinken: One word has been dropped.

LS: Yes, sure; I mean, or if you say, if he speaks of God in this connection, it is a strictly, simply pantheistic meaning and not any theistic meaning; that's clear. Now, let us go on. So, we clear that up; and it was quite good to bring it up on this occasion, but it is, I believe, not the first occasion that this occurred. But you were particularly struck by that. Now, let us turn to page 407, paragraph 3.

Mr. Reinken: "You know how to suffer and to die; you know how to bear the heavy yoke of necessity in ills of the body, but you have not yet learnt to give a law to the desires of your heart; and the difficulties of life arise rather from our affections^{xii} than from our needs. Our desires are vast, our strength is little better than nothing. In his wishes man is dependent on many things; in himself he is dependent on nothing, not even on his own life; the more his connections are multiplied, the greater his sufferings. Everything upon earth has an end; sooner or later all that we love escapes from our fingers, and we behave as if it would last for ever. What was your terror at the mere suspicion of Sophie's death?"^{xiii}

LS: This was the very tough action of Rousseau, which you surely read, when he suddenly confronts him and says, what would you say now if you would hear that Sophie is dead? You see, Rousseau was not very gentle. Well you have read that, we don't have to. . . . We leave it at this. I keep only one point in mind for the further argument: attachments increase suffering—obvious. I mean, the more people you love, the more you are vulnerable. Think only of the possibility of death, the clearest case. And therefore the solitary contemplator is beyond all attachments; and therefore the negative condition, no attachment, is fulfilled. Let us turn to the next paragraph; well, we cannot read [everything].

Student: It is a good Eastern philosophical view.

LS: Yes; no, a Western, too. Western, too: Stoics, Epicureans, surely. Attachment—well, we do not have to read that—attachment endangers happiness. In the next paragraph, he shows—as we

^{xi} Psalm 46:10.

^{xii} "Arise much more from our affections."

^{xiii} *E*, 816; 632.

do not have to be shown—that attachment endangers duty. Well, we have seen how . . . you know, that he was about to forget his duty because of Sophie. Now, we turn to page 408, paragraph 2.

Mr. Reinken: “My son, there is no happiness without courage, nor virtue without a struggle. The word virtue is derived from a word signifying strength, and strength is the foundation of all virtue. Virtue is the heritage of a creature weak by nature but strong by will; that is the whole merit of the righteous man; and though we call God good we do not call Him virtuous, because He does good without effort. I waited to explain the meaning of this word, so often profaned, until you were ready to understand me. As long as virtue is quite easy to practise, there is little need to know it. This need arises with the awakening of the passions; your time has come.”^{xiv}

LS: So, the distinction between virtue and goodness which is here implied is crucial for Rousseau. Goodness is natural. Man is by nature good. Virtue is not natural; it originates in the will, and not in nature. Its relation to nature is very complex in Rousseau. God is good, but not virtuous. This of course was always said in the latter [inaudible], but nevertheless what Rousseau means by it is rather different, as will appear from the sequel. Rousseau claimed for himself only goodness, not virtue; and one doesn’t need merely the *Reveries* for that; one only has to read the *Confessions* in order to see that this was not a man of outstanding virtue—no Cato. Now, let us read the next paragraph.

Mr. Reinken: ““When I brought you up in all the simplicity of nature, instead of preaching disagreeable duties, I secured for you immunity from the vices which make such duties disagreeable; I made lying not so much hateful as unnecessary in your sight; I taught you not so much to give others their due, as to care little about your own rights^{xv}; I made you kindly rather than virtuous. But the kindly man is only kind so long as he finds it pleasant—”

LS: In French, of course, it is always “good.”^{xvi} The same term, “good,” is preserved: “But he who is only good remains such only as long as he has the pleasure in being so.”

Mr. Reinken: ““goodness falls to pieces at the shock of human passions; the good man is only good to himself—”^{xvii}

LS: “for himself.” Yes, that is clear: goodness is a strictly selfish affair, from which pity somehow branches out without losing entirely its fundamentally selfish character.

Student: Does that mean the goodness of God is selfish, or is that illegitimate?

LS: We have studied this passage. If you read in—I do not know; no one has my Garnier edition here; you have another one—I know where it is; unfortunately I do not have the first volume here. In the first volume, page 286, following, there is an allusion to this question—I cannot

^{xiv} E, 817; 633.

^{xv} “to care only for what is yours.”

^{xvi} Rather than Foxley’s “kind” and “kindly.” The term is indeed “*bon*.”

^{xvii} E, 818; 633.

reproduce it now, but I remember, that is a great question whether . . . And this is of course the difficulty regarding . . . yes, the self-sufficient being.^{xviii} This is exactly the same point.

Now, in an earlier passage, on page 382, paragraph 3, which we cannot now read, we have seen that passions and boredom belong together.^{xix} Both are fought by virtue. This is perhaps of some importance in this context. Now, we turn—although this is all very important, we cannot possibly read all—we read on page 409, the second paragraph. No, I’m sorry, we must read the next paragraph first: “What then is the virtuous man?”

Mr. Reinken: ““What is meant by a virtuous man?””

LS: In contradistinction to the good man.

Mr. Reinken: ““He who can conquer his affections; for then he follows his reason, his conscience; he does his duty; he is his own master and nothing can turn him from the right way.””

LS: Literally, “he holds himself, or he stays, within the order, and nothing can remove him from that.”

Mr. Reinken: ““So far you have had only the semblance of liberty, the precarious liberty of the slave who has not received his orders. Now is the time for real freedom; learn to be your own master; control your heart, my Emile, and you will be virtuous.””^{xx}

LS: In other words, without virtue, men are either impassioned, slaves to their passions, or bored. Only virtue gives the freedom from both, from the sham fullness of passion and the emptiness of boredom. But we must keep in mind that goodness, as Rousseau understands it, also is beyond passion and boredom—this we must not forget—goodness in the highest sense. Now, let us pursue this further by turning to page 409, paragraph 2.

Mr. Reinken: ““It is a mistake to classify the passions as lawful and unlawful, so as to yield to the one and refuse the other. All alike are good if we are their masters; all alike are bad if we abandon ourselves to them. Nature forbids us—””

LS: “What is forbidden to us by nature.” That is very emphatic here. Namely, as distinguished from any other, by law or so.

Mr. Reinken: ““to extend our relations—””

LS: “our attachments.”

^{xviii} *E*, 503; 372.

^{xix} *E*, 782-83; 604.

^{xx} *E*, 818; 633.

Mr. Reinken: “‘beyond the limits of our strength; reason forbids us to want what we cannot get, conscience forbids us, not to be tempted, but to yield to temptation. To feel or not to feel a passion is beyond our control, but we can control ourselves.’”

LS: “but it depends on us”—the old Stoic formula—“to rule over them.”

Mr. Reinken: “‘Every sentiment under our own control is lawful; those which control us are criminal. A man is not guilty if he loves his neighbor's wife, provided he keeps this unhappy passion under the control of the law of duty; he is guilty if he loves his own wife so greatly as to sacrifice everything to that love.’”^{xxi}

LS: This is, I believe, a very crucial passage. We have here three sources of prohibition and commands: nature, reason, and conscience. Now, what do they say? What does nature forbid? Simply stated, to love the mortal as if it were immortal, because that means to increase our attachments beyond our force; then we are necessarily unhappy. What does reason forbid? To will the impossible—to will; in the case of nature the will is not addressed, but the love. And conscience forbids to succumb to temptations. This is, I think, the natural way to understand. From this I would conclude that nature and reason do not forbid, as such, to succumb to temptations—i.e. only conscience, and not nature and reason, is strictly speaking moral—strictly speaking. Now, in order to understand the bearing of this, one has to consider the obvious connection in Rousseau's thought between conscience and virtue. After all, this is our problem now, to understand the precise relation of goodness and virtue. [Blackboard]. Let us see these things, that everyone can remember at every moment what we have in mind: goodness; virtue. That is our question: what is the precise difference? And then we—I suggest tentatively that we correlate that with conscience and correlate goodness with nature and reason. Let us see whether that is of any help. You must have noticed an implicit criticism of the Tenth Commandment, did you? Thou shalt not covet.

Student: Or, “he who has looked on a woman with adultery in his mind . . .”^{xxii}

LS: Yes, and here he even speaks of . . . if one loves another man's wife—which is more than merely looking at her and coveting. So, in other words, the conscience is doubtless . . .⁸ has very much to do with Biblical morality, more than the philosophic morality. Now, the assertion that all passions are good as in themselves is a strange assertion, isn't it? I mean, there are some passions of which one can say they are neutral: they can be good; they can be bad—say, glory, emulation and so on. But what about such a dirty thing like envy? How can one possibly say that envy as envy is good? It is hard.

Student: Well, if it is controlled it might be.

LS: But how can it be good even if controlled?

Student: Can't you envy somebody's virtue?

^{xxi} *E*, 819; 634.

^{xxii} A paraphrase of Matthew 5:28.

LS: Even that. I mean, emulation, that's another matter. But envy is simply, "I wish he were not virtuous," without any effort on your part to be virtuous yourself.

Student: Doesn't it imply I wish I were as virtuous as he?

LS: That is not in itself envy. Envy means simply you wish him not to be virtuous.

Student: In French, "*j'ai envie de*."^{xxiii}

LS: But that doesn't mean envy. It means I have no, I⁹ lack . . . Well, of course, Rousseau could probably, may say, well, we must not be misguided by language and must analyze the phenomenon, and then you would come to such things like the common root: the concern, the unpleasantness created by other people's superiority. Now, this unpleasantness can lead to emulation, which is good, and can lead to the wholly sterile thing, envy, which is bad. This is probably the way in which he would do it. Still, the statement in itself, in its sweepingness, that all passions are good when one controls them, is surely very strange.

Student: The way I thought of this when I came across it is, since all passions are good in so far as they are controlled, you have to look at the bad passions as being those which get out of control. In other words, envy, which goes hand in hand with emulation is only bad . . . It is good to emulate somebody's virtue, but when you get to the point where this has gone so far that you aren't even anxious to work yourself, to strive for it, then it turns into envy, and this is . . .

LS: Well, Rousseau would break down the passions as ordinarily designated, and would say as I tried to state it before; and perhaps these are the passions he has in mind. Now, let us turn to the next paragraph.

Mr. Reinken: "Do not expect me to supply you with lengthy precepts of morality, I have only one rule to give you which sums up all the rest. Be a man; restrain your heart within the limits of your manhood."^{xxiv} Study and know these limits; however narrow they may be, we are not unhappy within them; it is only when we wish to go beyond them that we are unhappy, only when, in our mad passions, we try to attain the impossible—"

LS: Literally, "one puts into the rank of the possibles that which is not," namely, possible. Now, we can leave it here. Which of the previously mentioned . . . No, let us finish this paragraph.

Mr. Reinken: "we are unhappy when we forget our manhood to make an imaginary world for ourselves, from which we are always slipping back into our own. The only good things, whose loss really affects us, are those which we claim as our rights. If it is clear that we cannot obtain what we want, our mind turns away from it; wishes without hope cease to torture us. A beggar is not tormented by a desire to be a king; a king only wishes to be a god when he thinks himself more than man."^{xxv}

^{xxiii} Playing on *envie* as "want" and "envy." But *avoir envie de* is unambiguously "I want . . ."

^{xxiv} "of your condition."

^{xxv} *E*, 819; 634-35.

LS: All right. Now, what does he see here? Here we see, I would say—what he describes here corresponds to what he has spoken of before as reason. Reason forbids us to will what we cannot obtain—that seems to be here the theme. But for a reason which I don't remember now, I felt that here he asserts a partial agreement between reason and conscience, as distinguished before. I must confess I do not see it now.

Student: They both are connected with the will in some way.

LS: Yes, but that would not be enough. He does not speak here of temptations, does he?

Student: “*désirs insensés*,” in about the fifth line.

LS: Yes, perhaps. I do not know; I am sorry.

Student: Unless it was this thing about pull your heart back, which is sort of similar to sentiment.

LS: Pardon?

Student: Where he says, be a man and then pull your heart back into this condition; which is not a willful act as much as A rational act as much as it is a sentimental act.

LS: No, I probably meant the fact that here the desires as desires are directly meant, and not mere wills. Now, let us read on page 410, the first paragraph.

Mr. Reinken: “Would you live in wisdom and happiness, fix your heart on the beauty that is eternal; let your desires be limited by your position, let your duties take precedence of your wishes; extend the law of necessity into the region of morals; learn to lose what may be taken from you; learn to forsake all things at the command of virtue, to set yourself above the chances of life, to detach your heart before it is torn in pieces, to be brave in adversity so that you may never be wretched, to be steadfast in duty that you may never be guilty of a crime.”^{xxvi}

LS: Let us stop here for one moment. Here it seems he asserts a complete agreement between conscience and reason. If we bring together at least duty with conscience, and the concern with happiness with reason. Let us turn to the end of this paragraph.

Mr. Reinken: ““You will spend your life in peace, and you will leave it without terror; you will detach yourself from life as from other things. Let others, horror-struck, believe that when this life is ended they cease to be; conscious of the nothingness of life, you will think that you are but entering upon the true life. To the wicked, death is the close of life; to the just it is its dawn.””^{xxvii}

LS: Yes; now, if we can apply the distinction between conscience and reason here, I would say that the immortality of the soul, which is here made the criterion, is of course connected with the conscience, as we could know from the Profession of Faith. And what corresponds to it on the

^{xxvi} E, 820; 635.

^{xxvii} E, 820; 635.

basis of reason and nature would be the sentiment of existence. But this would [all] need¹⁰ a long reconsideration of the earlier argument.

Student: I have one question before you go on. When you mentioned earlier about the passion and boredom belong together, now, there's no textual reference to boredom, is there, in this passage?

LS: Not here. On page 382, he speaks of the fact that passion and boredom belong together, and both are fought by virtue.^{xxviii} But clearly both are also fought by, or excluded, rather, by goodness.

Student: It is minor point, but part of the reason I see this as being so complicated is that somebody mentioned [inaudible], that when you look at the *Julie*, the one thing about the lady herself, Julie, is that religion, which is perhaps the [inaudible] of virtue for her, does not nonetheless keep her from being bored. She constantly cries out about her boredom.

LS: Yes, but virtue is . . . I mean, to the extent to which a man is virtuous, he is beyond boredom, which would fully agree with what he says. Then it would mean that Julie's virtue is not perfect.

Student: Or, to push it one step further, that religion is not virtue.

LS: In the case of Julie, you cannot distinguish it, because her whole virtue has a religious basis; you cannot make the distinction here. There was something on page 411, in the third paragraph. Perhaps we read it.

Mr. Reinken: ““You wish to marry Sophie and you have only known her five months! You wish to marry her, not because she is a fit wife for you, but because she pleases you; as if love were never mistaken as to fitness, as if those, who begin with love, never ended with hatred! I know she is virtuous; but is that enough? Is fitness merely a matter of honor?””

LS: Literally, “is it sufficient to be honest people to fit one another?”

Mr. Reinken: ““It is not her virtue I misdoubt, it is her disposition. Does a woman show her real character in a day? Do you know how often you must have seen her and under what varying conditions to really know her temper? Is four months of liking a sufficient pledge for the rest of your life? A couple of months hence you may have forgotten her;^{xxix} as soon as you are gone another may efface your image in her heart.””^{xxx}

LS: Yes, and so on; very sensible remarks, to be fit especially for young people to ponder. But what I am interested in here is only this, that . . . You remember the speech of the father to Sophie on the same subject; that was much earlier. There this question was stated in very different terms, where the inclination of the young lovers was regarded to be *the* consideration.

^{xxviii} See Session 15, p. 422.

^{xxix} “She may have forgotten you.”

^{xxx} *E*, 822; 637.

Do you remember that? Well, you don't know the reference to our edition; that's also very hard for me to find, this passage, the parallel, where the father speaks to Sophie.

Student: It's about thirty pages earlier.

LS: The difference is very interesting; I mean, one should compare it. And of course the situation is different, because the father had made sure something about the agreement of the backgrounds of the two, and therefore he could put all the emphasis on whether they love each other or not. So, this difficulty is easily disposed of. Now, let us turn to page 414. There is a title: "On Travels." That is the second and last title in the fifth book. The *Emile* is very thrifty with titles of this nature; they occur only in the fifth book;^{xxx} and the first title is "Sophie, or Woman," and the second is "Travels." Now, the first is perfectly revealing, because marriage was the subject. But here, what is the true subject of this travel section?

Student: Government.

LS: Government, yes; politics. So, in other words, it is . . . Rousseau does not wish to emphasize the political character of this section, and therefore he uses a broader subject—in a way broader—travels. But he does not emphasize that the travels have for their chief function the study, the comparative study of governments. We have a very appropriate title from our department. And needless to say that political society is of course *the* parallel to the conjugal society; this does not [inaudible]. So, in this respect the order is very logical. But the argument is rather this: political society, [the] variety of political societies, how can you know [about] that, except by traveling, if you don't want to rely on the reports of travelers—about which subject Rousseau has much to say. But someone raised his hand and I prevented him from speaking up.

Student: I somehow just didn't see this as being a sufficient answer for the reason for dividing the book into two parts. I tried to think of it, because you mentioned it last week, but if I were to make any divisions in the book, I would have set off the Profession of Faith, which Rousseau doesn't.

Student: It does have a title in this edition.

LS: Yes, I believe so. I don't have the first volume here. But I believe to remember that this . . . yes, sure: *Profession de Foi du Vicaire*, on page 3 in my edition here.

Mr. Butterworth: I don't have a title in mine. But it is a question of what the edition [inaudible].

LS: Yes, that is true; by all means. But I'm almost sure in my edition there was a . . . ere it is: *Profession de Foi du Vicaire Savoyard*. I have it in mine. But you are quite right, it is not a critical edition which I use.

Mr. Butterworth: This is, supposedly; at least it has a lot of footnotes.

^{xxx} As we are about to see, Strauss forgets about the title, contained in the Fourth Book, of the Profession of Faith.

LS: Does it have. . . ?

Mr. Butterworth: Nothing at all.

LS: Are you sure?

Mr. Butterworth: Positive.

Student: I have it.

LS: You have the same edition as Mr. Butterworth?

Student: Mine has pictures in it; does yours have pictures in it?

Mr. Butterworth: No.

LS: Well, this proves that it is an illustrated edition, but not a critical edition. But at any rate . . . it is in it?

Student: Yes.^{xxxii}

Student: Before we proceed, may I just ask a question which pertains to the immediately preceding section?

LS: By all means.

Student: On page 410, we saw that Rousseau is concerned that one would give too much concern to life, to life itself. So, one could say that although sentiment of existence gives rise to self-preservation, it also adds certain qualifications.

LS: Oh, yes.

Student: And is it possible then to say that—in very general terms—the romantic tradition as it came afterward would see in Rousseau this sort of poetic ideal of the short, glorious life—glorious understood in terms of sweetness?

LS: No, this was an older notion; I mean, it existed in older times. There was the [inaudible]^{xxxiii} of a French noble family: *courte et bonne*, short and good.^{xxxiv} No, but I believe there is one thing: what I am reminded of is Spinoza. Spinoza is starting from self-preservation, as they all do, and then making it clear, in a very complicated argument, which I have not yet unravelled,

^{xxxii} The section does have a title, “Profession de Foi Du Vicaire Savoyard.”

^{xxxiii} I here deleted “*breton*,” of which I cannot make sense in this context. The “[inaudible]” is mine, not the transcriber, and is based on the assumption that the transcriber misheard whatever was on the tape, which is lost.

^{xxxiv} A motto associated with Marie Louise Élisabeth d’Orléans, Duchess of Berry (1695-1719).

that self-preservation properly understood has nothing to do with duration of life, i.e. with length of life;^{xxxv} and therewith you get rid of the clinging to life, which was so crucial, especially to old Hobbes.

Student: But that would be a certain difference. I mean, wouldn't Hobbes be pictured as the calculator simply . . . ?

LS: Oh, absolutely; was even proud of it.

Student: Whereas in Rousseau there would be these qualifications.

LS: Yes; in other words, there is nothing heroic in Hobbes; and Rousseau . . . ¹¹ wrote an essay, which Mr. Butterworth quoted, on the heroic.

Student: "*De la vertu propre à l'héros.*"^{xxxvi}

Student: Mr. Strauss, I have one question about this last paragraph on page 411: it is strange that he is about to advise Emile to leave Sophie. He says you cannot know her character; you've only known her four months; what will she be like in the future. Would it be forcing a parallel to speak of, to say, it is necessary to know states and governments, but with women it is still illusion, although she is going to be your wife

LS: I don't see. I mean, does it not perfectly make sense to say that it is important, especially for someone who loves a woman for the first time, to find out the difference between love and infatuation? And the best way to bring that about is separation. Separation; where each meets other people of the other sex; and perhaps it proves to be only an infatuation, and then it is better they find it out in time. I don't see why one should go beyond that. You mean, just as one should take a critical look at one's own country by traveling, one should But she is not yet his wife.

Student: I see; if he were to stay with her instead of going away, and perhaps losing his illusions—if he were to stay with her, he'd still remain in his infatuated state.

LS: Not necessarily. He might also find out after a short while that it was the wrong choice, and then he has to stick to it for the rest of his days. And this is an unwise thing to do; and therefore¹² [Emile's governor] suggests wisely a separation of some time. And then, in order to make the separation meaningful, to travel, and to travel intelligently. And that is what he is doing.

Student: Of course, he explicitly says that the traveling, because of Sophie, will be a more purposeful He will be able to keep his mind on the objects of his travel as opposed to picking up the frivolities and vices of a place.

LS: Yes, sure; in other words, he has an object, because he has in mind to find the most desirable country, where to settle with Sophie.

^{xxxv} *Ethics*, Part 3, P8.

^{xxxvi} *Discours Sur La Vertu Du Héros* or *Discours Sur Cette Question: Quelle est la Vertu La Plus Necessaire au Héros et Quels sont les Héros a que Cette Vertu a Manqué?*

Student: I was just wondering if in a way that both Sophie and travel were in some sense on politics. I mean, both parts of the fifth book.

LS: In which sense?

Student: I was thinking in the sense of, look at the whole introduction of Sophie as merely a necessary fellowship [inaudible], something which in a sense must be put up with, but not a thing which is desirable in itself.

LS: Oh, no; that you cannot say. On the contrary, I tried to show that Rousseau boosts the status of women, and not only. . . . Well, surely beyond Aristotle, but I think also beyond what Plato seriously meant. That you couldn't say. The only thing which is doubtless true, that every political philosopher is of course compelled to think not only about the political association but also about the conjugal association. That is the subject matter; that doesn't bespeak any influence or dependence.

Student: I mean in terms of his freedom, his [inaudible], and so forth. In other words, the selection of a partner will permit the continuation of

LS: Oh, I see. In other words, the matter of free choice is applied not only to the wife, but also to the *polis*. Is this what you meant? Well, there is something to that, that is quite true. That is true. I mean, in this case of the particularly favored Emile, he can choose his country as much as everyone can choose—well, relatively speaking—his wife.

Student: One thing on that last item: I was wondering, if Rousseau had written the book on Sophie alone and he had introduced an Emile which we aren't familiar with at the end, if necessarily Emile would be the same Emile that we met at the beginning of the book.

LS: No, he is incomplete. He is incomplete without Sophie, and to say nothing of this fact, for example, the difference of education between the two, between Emile and Sophie, throws great light retroactively on Emile's education, especially on the question of religious education. Oh, no, that is not an afterthought; that's, I think, essential to the argument.

Student: [Inaudible] where she has to be; because he reaches another stage in life, that this is in some degree necessary.

LS: Oh, I believe what you mean is this, this remark we read, that the sexual desire, on which the whole thing is ultimately based, is not necessary in the way in which the desire for food, for example [is]. Very well; and this could mean that men of another kind than Emile would not need to marry. Do you mean that? That is also true. In other words, that is one other point of the difference between Rousseau—who was in no serious sense of the word married. Did he marry?

Student: He married at the end.

LS: I see. But this was, I think, *purement administratif*. Well, he liked her in a way; but surely she was not a true companion of Rousseau.

Student: He says *ma compagnon*.^{xxxvii}

LS: Yes, I know; but in a very limited manner.

Student: One question: we probably won't get to this today, but I would just like to insert a question about whether or not *Emile* can in the end have free choice regarding his country. It seems to me that if he had really—

END OF TAPE SIDE ONE

[In progress] **Student:** —I think they never went to Persia; but supposing he had said I would like to live in Persia.

LS: Yes; that was, of course, excluded, because that was a despotic government; and how would a man educated by Jean-Jacques ever dream of becoming the subject of a despot? I mean, the question would only be Switzerland and, well, perhaps France, after all.

Student: And England.

LS: Yes, England; you are quite right, quite right. I had forgotten England. But of course we dismiss entirely the question of what the other end will do in such a case: whether they would accept him as a citizen, or subject.

Student: I see I'm getting myself into trouble already in what I say, but the point is—

LS: How good that I took it away from you.

Student: How do you reconcile this statement of the free choice, which I interpret as a kind of a possibility, but still the duty to love your countrymen who protected you during your childhood, and

LS: That is not so simple. According to Rousseau's official teaching in the *Social Contract*, if you have fulfilled your military duty, paid your taxes, or the equivalent of that, then you may in a legally arranged manner cease to be a citizen of that country, and leave it, and become a citizen^{xxxviii}

Student: Does he say it in this book, though, in the *Emile*?

LS: That is not . . . after all, I mean, if he refers you explicitly to the *Social Contract* in the *Emile*, it is a safe assumption that for a full understanding of the *Emile* one should also read the

^{xxxvii} In the *Confessions*; for example, Rousseau, 1995, 378.

^{xxxviii} In Book 3, Chapter 18 of the *Social Contract*, in which Rousseau appears to agree with Grotius's teaching. Rousseau, 1994, 197.

Social Contract. I mean, that is not a far-fetched demand, that if you want to understand the *Emile* you have to read the *Social Contract*, and vice versa. Now, let us come then to the travel section, in which there are a number of remarks. Let us turn to page 415 in the fourth paragraph.

Mr. Reinken: “But is it necessary to travel the whole globe to study mankind? Need we go to Japan to study Europeans? Need we know every individual before we know the species? No, there are men so much alike that it is not worth while to study them individually. When you have seen a dozen Frenchmen you have seen them all. Though one cannot say as much of the English and other nations, it is, however, certain that every nation has its own specific character, which is derived by induction from the study, not of one, but many of its members.”

LS: “*plusieurs*” has even this meaning in French: “some.”

Mr. Reinken: “He who has compared a dozen^{xxxix} nations knows men, just [as] he who has compared a dozen Frenchmen knows the French.”^{xl}

LS: Yes. So the point is, there are—I mean, that is crucial for the whole argument in Rousseau everywhere—there are national characters. And the basis is simply he has lived in a number of countries—in Switzerland, France, England. And then he has seen that there are . . . A Frenchman differs from an Englishman in spite of all [inaudible], and the basis is induction. And induction has here the old Aristotelian sense, not the sense of present-day social science. You have seen it in a number of cases; uncontested experience; you know nothing to the contrary; you can leave it at that. This is the first general statement. Now, let us read at the bottom of this page.

Mr. Reinken: “There are Frenchmen in every corner of the globe. In no country of the world do you find more people who have traveled than in France. And yet of all the nations of Europe, that which has seen most, knows least. The English are also travelers, but they travel in another fashion; these two nations must always be at opposite extremes. The English nobility travels, the French stays at home; the French people travel, the English stay at home. This difference does credit, I think, to the English. The French almost always travel for their own ends; the English do not seek their fortune in other lands, unless in the way of commerce and with their hands full; when they travel it is to spend their money, not to live by their wits; they are too proud to cringe before strangers. This is why they learn more abroad than the French who have other fish to fry. Yet the English have their national prejudices; but these prejudices are not so much the result of ignorance as of feeling. The Englishman's prejudices are the result of pride, the Frenchman's are due to vanity.”^{xli}

LS: Yes, a great compliment to the English. This was of course the greatest subject in a way of the comparison of nations in the eighteenth century—the French and the English—and almost in every continental novel there occurs the “milord,” as the French say, who exhibits these strange qualities of being the subject of a . . . well, somehow, who can elect his government, you know, so different from the mere subjects of the French. And also [he] has this thing which is called “*le spleen*” in French: I mean, a peculiar whimsicalness which the continentals wouldn't find

^{xxxix} While the change is immaterial, the word is “ten” (*dix*), not a “dozen” in both cases.

^{xl} *E*, 825-26; 641-42.

^{xli} *E*, 828; 642.

anywhere. I thought this is quite amusing. But later on on page 416 in the fourth paragraph—that is perhaps too long to read. No, let us read this paragraph beginning a bit later, on page 416, paragraph 4.

Mr. Reinken: “It must also be admitted that the original characteristics of different nations are changing day by day—”

LS: No, “*s’effacer*” is more than change: erasing themselves. Well, there is a more simple English word which doesn’t occur to me.

Student: Vanishing?

LS: Yes.

Mr. Reinken: “vanishing day to day , and are therefore more difficult to grasp. As races blend and nations intermingle, those national differences which formerly struck the observer at first sight gradually disappear. Before our time every nation remained more or less cut off from the rest; the means of communication were fewer; there was less traveling, less of mutual or conflicting interests, less political and civil intercourse between nation and nation; those intricate schemes of royalty, miscalled diplomacy, were less frequent; there were no permanent ambassadors resident at foreign courts; long voyages were rare, there was little foreign trade, and what little there was, was either the work of princes, who employed foreigners, or of people of no account who had no influence on others and did nothing to bring the nations together. The relations between Europe and Asia in the present century are a hundredfold more numerous than those between Gaul and Spain in the past; Europe alone was less accessible^{xlii} than the whole world is now.”^{xliii}

LS: “*éparse*” is not exactly “accessible”: “less populated than the whole earth is now.” So, in other words, national characters are about to disappear, at least in Europe. Now, how does Rousseau think of that? Let us skip the next paragraph and then go on.

Mr. Reinken: “This is why the ancient distinctions of race, the effect of soil and climate, made a greater difference between nation and nation in respect of temperament, looks, manners,^{xliv} and character than can be distinguished in our own time, when the fickleness of Europe leaves no time for natural causes to work, when the forests are cut down and the marshes drained, when the earth is more generally, though less thoroughly, tilled, so that the same differences between country and country can no longer be detected even in purely physical features.”^{xlv}

LS: In other words, the natural causes—that is the point which Rousseau has in mind—the fundamental reason why there are natural differences are natural causes, climate, and other

^{xlii} An odd translation of plus *éparse*, which could be translated as “more scattered,” the opposite of “brought together”; Kelly translates it “more diverse.” Strauss seems to think it connect it to sparse as small in quantity, but it is better connected to sparse as scattered.

^{xliii} *E*, 829-30; 643.

^{xliv} *moeurs*

^{xlv} *E*, 830; 644.

things, as he says here in the paragraph which we omitted. But Rousseau doesn't speak here [of] why this is, that this is an undesirable development; that he emphasizes elsewhere.^{xlvi} And this is of course the theoretical basis for nationalism later on in the nineteenth century. But on the basis of Rousseau, these national differences It is good that the human race is divided into a variety of peoples, naturally divided, and that has something to do with the goodness of nature. This is not done by men; it is done by nature. There is only one step from here to the natural boundaries as the good boundaries: the rivers and high mountains, or whatever the natural boundaries may be. At the end of the second paragraph after this, he says, "Commerce and the arts, which mingle and confound the peoples."

Mr. Reinken: "at the same time prevent them from studying each other—" ^{xlvii}

LS: Yes; and we have seen what Rousseau thought about commerce and the arts already in the *First Discourse*. This modern development, which now has of course become worldwide, no longer limited to Europe, this levelling development is not to Rousseau's taste, as you know. The purpose here, however, is not to speak about the desirability or undesirability of the development, but what it means to the study of foreign nations. The study of foreign nations becomes more difficult the more they become similar. I mean, at the time when it was possible to recognize a people from its food, its drink, from the way in which they sleep—and of course also in the higher things [national characters are easier to study]—[that] ceases the more you get everywhere the same food and drink and so on. And that is of course spreading very rapidly in our age.

Student: [Inaudible] immediate commonsense questions that one asks when one travels, or travelers ask in other countries.

LS: You mean, what are these differences? One is struck by them, and it is hard to nail them down?

Student: An American, being in a European country, is almost always . . . ¹³ encountered by the question, is it true that you drink milk; or what do you people eat; or tell us about your breakfasts; and things like that. It's just to show that somehow opinion keeps up.

LS: Yes; well, I think the English are still most easily recognizable by their eating habits. I mean, a British breakfast and a British high tea are unexchangeable with anything else in the world. I believe that when one looks for natural character, one will be deceived, if one does not look for that. And just occasionally something comes to your attention, and you think of it for the first time, then one can be reasonably sure that one has reached some safe ground. And then, I believe language is very important—and I do not mean what linguists do, you know, the grammatical and syntactic structure, but for¹⁴ [some] [things] there are words in a given language and no words in another language. That, I always found . . . I mean, ordinary things. For example, that the German word *Gemütlich* is untranslatable into English, and the English word generosity is untranslatable into German, that I found always very helpful for my orientation. Pardon?

^{xlvixlvi} In the *Poland*, for example. Rousseau, 2005, 174-75.

^{xlvii} *E*, 831; 644.

Student: *Sympathique*, the adjective in French, which somehow doesn't translate into the English sympathetic.

LS: Yes, but in German that is the same.

Student: And then too, just to follow this point up, Rousseau is correct in saying you find more of these differences outside of the cities.

LS: Yes, sure; but what was a very tiny beginning around 1762 has now become a terrific stream [inaudible]; I mean, that is clear. The fact still remains; it is only more difficult, it becomes more technical, as it were, to speak about [national differences]—also the rapid changes within nations. Of course, if someone would say there are invariable national characters, then he would be hard-put to prove that. But—you know, when you read descriptions of the various nations, say, in the sixteenth century, and compared . . . Well, Filmer^{xlvi} has such a list, I remember now. I forgot about it: the French, the Germans, the English and the Spaniards. And the English are there described as devils, because they were so disobedient to their kings; in other words, a very rebellious nation. No one, I believe, would say it of the English of a later age. So, these things do change.

Student: This same development seems very important for Nietzsche, the coming together and falling apart of national characters and boundaries in Europe; and you know, I am never quite sure whether Nietzsche greets it with favor or opposes it. I mean, he seems to oppose the pettiness, the sort of petty nationalism, and to look forward to the new man to be a European, and yet somehow he isn't really—he doesn't really well receive this; he reacts somewhat the same way Rousseau does.

LS: Yes, but on the other hand . . . that is hard to say whether Nietzsche accepted it only grudgingly. That is hard to say; because after all, from one point of view, he welcomes this development to some higher human possibility, as he saw it, you know, than any previous view—you have read *Beyond Good and Evil*, after all—he thinks a development of man is now possible surpassing all earlier developments. Now, this new development is bound up, politically speaking, with the unity of Europe, and to that extent he surely welcomed it. I mean, he could not have welcomed a union on the lowest common basis, on the basis, say, of a merely utilitarian basis—this isn't, I think, a defensible position. I mean, after all, if men would agree only on a live and let live on the lowest basis, that couldn't be good. I mean, in other words, if each would forget its best heritage for the sake of a common denominator of all, on the lowest level, I believe he would not think that this is a good solution. And this is, of course, today also true in the whole question of East and West; I mean, India and China—I mean, non-Red China—and the West. Whether this [coming together] should take place on the level of the lowest, logical positivism and its concomitants—you know, that this can be learned by anyone anywhere within a short time and an agreement possible—or in consideration of the deepest thoughts of both sides and of an understanding of the two sides—a mutual understanding of both sides—at the highest. That would obviously be a great difference. The former, we can have very easily any day, you know,

^{xlvi} Robert Filmer, 1588-1653, author of *Patriarcha*, a defense of the divine right of kings and, famously, an object of Locke's criticism in the *First Treatise*. The comparison is of English, French, and Spanish subjects (Chapter 2, Section 19).

as every social science convention shows; as all of you who have attended such conventions—I do not—surely know better than I do. Now, Rousseau continues the issue of traveling in the sequel, page 418; he describes the philosophers’ way of traveling, and speaking here of the examples of Thales, Plato, and Protagoras. Perhaps we read this paragraph 4 on page 418.

Mr. Reinken: “To travel to see foreign lands or to see foreign nations are two very different things. The former is the usual aim of the curious,^{xlix} the latter is merely subordinate to it. If you wish to travel as a philosopher you should reverse this order. The child observes things till he is old enough to study men. Man should begin by studying his fellows; he can study things later if time permits.

It is therefore illogical to conclude that travel is useless because we travel ill. But granting the usefulness of travel, does it follow that it is good for all of us? Far from it; there are very few people who are really fit to travel; it is only good for those who are strong enough in themselves to listen to the voice of error without being deceived, strong enough to see the example of vice without being led away by it.”^l

LS: Well, let us go on. He describes at some length—it is worth reading by all means—what the conditions for fruitful traveling are. I do not know whether in these organizations now responsible for traveling, especially of social scientists, these things are considered. It might be a good idea if the Rockefeller Foundation would bring out a booklet, and condensing the most solid things here or from other writers than from Rousseau—[that] might not be bad. Now, there is then a transition on page 419, in the third paragraph, to the political subject, and the parallel with marriage. Yes, this seems to be quite. . . . I have here a note, that there is a parallel with marriage: in both cases it is a contract. The contract of marriage, the social contract, and therefore this fits well together. Let us now turn to the political discussion proper, which begins on page 421, in the fourth paragraph.

Mr. Reinken: “The science of politics—”

LS: Excuse me; what was the first word of the paragraph? “Political right” is, of course, the correct translation. What did she say?

Mr. Reinken: She says “the science of politics.”

LS: No, no; he does not speak of the science; [he speaks of] political right. Political right; you can say public law.^{li}

Mr. Reinken: “Public law is and probably always will be unknown. Grotius, our leader in this branch of learning, is only a child, and what is worse an untruthful child.”

LS: “of bad faith,” he even says.

^{xlix} “the former is always the aim of the curious.”

^l *E*, 832; 645.

^{li} Strauss is correct. The phrase is “droit politique,” though, as Strauss and the Reader also indicate, Rousseau calls droit politique “cette grand et inutile science,” that great and useless science.”

Mr. Reinken: “When I hear Grotius praised to the skies and Hobbes overwhelmed with abuse, I perceive how little sensible men have read or understood these authors. As a matter of fact, their principles are exactly alike, they only differ in their mode of expression. Their methods are also different: Hobbes relies on sophism; Grotius relies on the poets; they are agreed on everything else.”^{lii}

LS: That’s a typical Rousseauan statement. Now, what do we make of that? We have seen something about Rousseau’s relation to Hobbes at the beginning of the *Second Discourse*. Here he speaks only of what separates him from Hobbes, and therefore he is very negative. But still, Hobbes¹⁵ gets a relatively good press: he is not worse than Grotius. Now, Grotius, of course was a star in heaven, and Rousseau pays a great compliment to Hobbes to say that Grotius is not a bit better than this execrated Hobbes. So, this is the beginning: both are What he means, of course, is that Grotius quotes poets all the time to show that a certain view of right is, was well-known throughout the times, and Hobbes, of course, does not quote poets; he has only syllogisms. But Hobbes [or rather]¹⁶ [Rousseau] says these syllogisms are sophisms, meaning What does he mean precisely? Not that the premises are wrong, but I suppose that Hobbes argues badly. And in a way, it will be made clear in the sequel. Now, go on. The next [paragraph] he begins, surely, like a reformer of a science: the science does not exist—just as Hobbes says that, Hobbes gets it back now: Hobbes hasn’t changed the situation a bit. Now?

Mr. Reinken: “In modern times the only man who could have created this vast and useless science was the illustrious Montesquieu. But he was not concerned with the principles of political law; he was content to deal with the positive laws of settled governments; and nothing could be more different than these two branches of study.”^{liii}

LS: What do you say to that? I mean, is this a good judgment of Montesquieu?

Student: This is very, very equivocal, because it certainly is a reproach to Montesquieu, but there is one adjective [inaudible] which modifies this science: it’s a great and useless science.

LS: Yes, but useless because of the stupidity of men—in other words, *de facto* useless; *de jure* the most useful of all sciences, that’s what he means. And I think in a way he is of course correct; because Montesquieu describes the positive law of practically all nations, surely. But in another sense it is, of course, not true, because the implication *is* a public law, which he develops. For example, the doctrine of separation of powers is clearly not meant merely as a historical statement about the British or the Roman constitution, but is meant to be—this is the sound order wherever you can have it. But in a crude way, it is of course correct. Now, he makes this a bit clearer in the sequel.

Mr. Reinken: “Yet he who would judge wisely in matters of actual government is forced to combine the two; he must know what ought to be in order to judge what is. The chief difficulty in the way of throwing light upon this important matter is to induce an individual to discuss and

^{lii} E, 836; 649.

^{liii} E, 836; 649.

to answer these two questions. ‘How does it concern me; and what can I do?’ Emile is in a position to answer both.”^{liv}

LS: Now, here, Rousseau It is obviously correct, isn’t it, that you cannot judge if you [do not] know what ought to be this is, I think elementary; and therefore our social science in its wisdom, denying knowledge of what ought to be, says, no value judgments whatever; don’t judge. Quite rightly. Now, the next paragraph.

Mr. Reinken: “The next difficulty is due to the prejudices of childhood, the principles in which we were brought up; it is due above all to the partiality of authors, who are always talking about truth, though they care very little about it; it is only their own interests that they care for, and of these they say nothing. Now the nation has—”

LS: “the people”; here we must have “the people.”

Mr. Reinken: “the people has neither professorships, nor pensions, nor membership of the academies to bestow. How then shall its rights be established by men of that type?”^{lv}

LS: You see: now comes an attack of a much broader character. These earlier political philosophers were not only incompetent; they were also corrupt, because they were—whether they admitted it or not, or whether they knew it or not—dependent on the powers that be. The first political philosopher not in the thrall of the powers that be, but speaking for *the* people—who do not give chairs in the university, and so on—is Rousseau.

Student: Sounds like Marx.

LS: Sure; but that is before Marx. No, Rousseau was in a way—that is, I think, quite, true—the first

Student: Hobbes?

LS: No, Hobbes really Hobbes wrote I mean, there is no question, I don’t want to mar his character, but in his first version he was strictly Stuarts—in practical terms—and then he was strictly Cromwell; and at the end he was strictly Stuart. He was never on the side of the popular party, the Puritan party; that’s perfectly correct. And that. . . . No, Rousseau speaks as a man of the [people]. I think he is the first philosopher who explicitly speaks as a man of the people. I wouldn’t know any earlier one; maybe I forgot someone. I mean, we have There were popular movements using philosophic doctrines, but that’s another matter; but that a philosopher I think he is the first. He is surely *the* philosopher of democracy, contrary to claims against him. There is only one who could be said to have been the first *philosopher* who was a philosopher of liberal democracy, and that was Spinoza. Now, Spinoza surely was not a man of the people, but he came as close as he could to it. He wrote in his pocketbook, he made, he drew a self-portrait in the costume of Massanello, a Neapolitan revolutionary of the seventeenth century. This was rather, that was an approximation to the philosopher-

^{liv} E, 836-37; 649.

^{lv} E, 837; 649.

revolutionary, but it was strictly imitative art, not . . . Rousseau came much closer to that. That I think is not unimportant for this whole modern development where philosophy, political philosophy gradually became call to action, ideology, as it is now called. Did you want to say something?

Student: The way you spell this out, it's certainly important, and the thing that I wondered about was, taking the specific sentence which does occur later in the *Social Contract*,^{lvi} or "the people doesn't give professorships, pensions, or academic places": that would apply perhaps to—most certainly to Grotius, and perhaps to Hobbes; but would it be fair to Montesquieu?

LS: Yes, but Montesquieu is in a way excluded, because he limited himself strictly to positive law.

Student: So he is no longer a philosopher.

LS: Yes, sure. Now, what does he say then about Emile? "I have done in such a way that this difficulty would be zero for Emile." Do you have that?

Mr. Reinken: "He scarcely knows what is meant by government; his business is to find the best; he does not want to write books."^{lvii}

LS: And so on; that we know. But he barely knows what government is, and the only thing which he ought to know is the best government. This is of course an extreme statement; it would seem to imply that you can know what the best government is, without knowing what government is. This Rousseau can hardly mean. But there is some suggestion as to the distinction between what government ought to be and what it is, that the question what ought to be can be answered independently of the question of what is. And I mean, if one is very literal, one can find a confirmation of that in Rousseau's famous remark so often quoted against him: "*Écartons les faits*,"^{lviii} let us disregard the facts; which has a much more [limited meaning] in the *Second Discourse*.¹⁷ But surely you cannot find out what the best government is by studying the actual governments, because you have already, you have a standard for distinguishing among them which are better and worse; because you can't—that you do not get by merely looking at them; this is clear. Now, in the next paragraph he draws the conclusion, "great talents are less required for this new science than a sincere love of justice and a genuine respect for the truth,"^{lix} because the temptation is so great that you are bribed by the powers that be. That has ruined more or less all earlier political philosophers, as has seen Rousseau.

Student: This is a reference to Emile, too, that he's not talented, but he has a—

LS: Yes, this he can understand. And this, by the way, would be a point of view for the comparison between the summary of the *Social Contract* and the *Social Contract* itself. This is

^{lvi} Possibly a reference to Book 2, Chapter 2, in which Rousseau blames Grotius for divesting the people of their rights in order to pay court to Louis XIII (Rousseau, 1994, 146).

^{lvii} *E*, 837; 649.

^{lviii} *SD*, 132; 19.

^{lix} *E*, 837; 650.

what Emile can and must learn; if there are other things in it—I mean other important things, not subdivisions—in the *Social Contract*, they are not necessary for Emile. Emile—especially, to take the most important case—Emile does not have to know anything about the legislator; surely crucial.

Student: But there is one thing that troubled me about this paragraph. It seems that the specious difficulty is, can I do this or not? He says, “There remains a third difficulty, more specious than solid, that I don’t want to resolve nor to propose.”^{lx} But he never says what that difficulty is. Now, just reading the paragraph over, it seems that the question is, do I, Rousseau, have the . . .

LS: Let us read it then, this paragraph.

Mr. Reinken: “There is a third difficulty, more specious than real; a difficulty which I neither desire to solve nor even to state; enough that I am not afraid of it; sure I am that in inquiries of this kind, great talents are less necessary than a genuine love of justice and a sincere reverence for truth. If matters of government can ever be fairly discussed, now or never is our chance.”^{lxi}

LS: There are two possibilities which occur to me when . . . I have not duly considered that. The first is, are you, Jean-Jacques, the man who believes to succeed where all these great men have failed? And then there would be an answer: it is not a matter of outstanding genius, but of sincere feeling for the mass of the people—that is number one. But there is obviously something else, when he says, here is the case, now or never. Now or never; that must have to do not with Rousseau in particular, but with the time. This time is the most favorable time to discover *the* political truth, and this could only mean, in my opinion, that a revolution is coming and either to prevent it, or to give it a desirable turn.

Student: Couldn’t it mean this time in Emile’s development? This sense of justice and reverence for truth in its purest state. . . ?

LS: That could be.

Student: He keeps talking about himself—the translator smothers one or two—but “*selon moi*,” he says.

LS: Yes, that could . . . I mean, I will not exclude it without further consideration. The reason why I do not believe it [is] because he would have had no hesitation to state that, and he doesn’t wish to state it.

Student: The thing that this drew my attention to is the chapter that precedes the *Social Contract*—it doesn’t have any title or anything—after he states the problem, he says, if I were a prince or a legislator I wouldn’t talk about these things, I would do them.^{lxii} And then he goes on

^{lx} *E*, 837; 649.

^{lxi} *E*, 837; 649-50.

^{lxii} Rousseau, 1994, 131. The paragraph in question is part of Book 1, but precedes the first chapter of that Book.

to say how he's a citizen of a state, a republic, and so forth, thus, sort of, as he is here, bolstering his own case for being able to treat these matters.

LS: That could be. There is a passage which I cannot find here—my reference must be wrong: “Before observing”—how does the next paragraph read?—“one must make oneself rules.”

Mr. Reinken: “Before beginning our observations we must lay down our rules of procedure—”

LS: “rules for one's observations.”

Mr. Reinken: “we must find a scale with which to compare our measurements. Our principles of political law^{lxiii} are our scale. Our actual measurements are the civil law of each country.”^{lxiv}

LS: “the political laws of each country,” meaning the positive public law. So, in other words, Emile will have the standard for judgment before he goes traveling. Now, this, of course, that it is not based on the observation of the countries, doesn't mean that this is a so-called *a priori* science. That it is not. It is based on the nature of things: on the nature of things; on the nature of man, fundamentally. Public law became an *a priori* science only after Rousseau in Kant. In Rousseau itself it has still an empirical basis, the empirical basis of self-preservation.

The time is advancing in an atrocious manner; we can read only one more point, on page 423, the second paragraph. He begins then the argument By the way, here is the paragraph which I meant, the next: “Our elements will be clear, simple, taken directly from the nature of things. Questions will form”^{lxv} and so on. And then he begins, quite informally; in other words, it is not a formal enumeration of all the items they discuss. And naturally, this is not haphazardly made, that is a clear point. Now, did you make any observation regarding the first paragraph, Mr. Butterworth?

Mr. Butterworth: Yes. The first thing is that this somehow embodies the first chapter—Book One, Chapter 1 and Chapter 2, of the *Social Contract*, but in a way that isn't stated in the *Social Contract*.

LS: Yes, sure. But I would say that altogether up to the point where he comes to the social contract itself, he simply summarizes the first five or six chapters of the *Social Contract*. I didn't find any substantive difference.

Mr. Butterworth: Substantive, no; but certainly omissions which For instance, one omission that I think is important is the fact that he doesn't emphasize the self-preservation forcing us into society.

LS: Yes, but this, one can rightly say, we have heard so much about self-preservation in this book that this is not necessary to emphasize this.

^{lxiii} “of political right.”

^{lxiv} *E*, 837; 650.

^{lxv} *E*, 837; 650.

Mr. Butterworth: I thought that it might be that Emile is not that concerned with it, since he [had been educated in virtue].

LS: Yes, because he has also undergone the training of the Savoyard Vicar.

Mr. Butterworth: Yes; plus Rousseau's whole training.

LS: Yes, but especially that, I believe. Now, only one more point and then we must stop. That is page 423, the second paragraph, which is very short.

Mr. Reinken: "We shall inquire whether man might not say that all sickness comes from God, and that it is therefore a crime to send for the doctor."^{lxvi}

LS: This thought is not developed in the first chapter [of the *Social Contract*]? I haven't read it in so long.

Student: No; this is in the third chapter of the [First Book].

LS: But in that context?

Student: Yes.

LS: Now, what does he mean by this statement?

Student: This somehow has to do with, if God gives us a despotic ruler, which is a sickness, we can

LS: Sure; no, I think he has a very definite passage of the New Testament in mind: Romans, 13:1: "Let every soul be subject unto the higher powers, for there is no power but of God." And he says that is true, but every sickness also is of God, and this is compatible with medicine; and therefore we may do something about the powers coming from God.

Student: Then it must refer directly back to the motto of the whole book: nature has given us the remedies to—

LS: Of the *Emile*, you mean; yes, sure. That he has clearly in mind. Now, let us perhaps read one more paragraph. On the same page, paragraph 5.

Mr. Reinken: "Suppose we reject this theory that might is right and admit the right of nature, or the authority of the father, as the foundation of society; we shall inquire into the extent of this authority; what is its foundation in nature? Has it any other grounds but that of its usefulness to the child, his weakness, and the natural love which his father feels towards him? When the child is no longer feeble, when he is grown-up in mind as well as in body,^{lxvii} does not he become the

^{lxvi} *E*, 838; 650.

^{lxvii} "when his reason is mature."

sole judge^{lxviii} of what is necessary for his preservation? Is he not therefore his own master, independent of all men, even of his father himself? For is it not still more certain that the son loves himself, than that the father loves his son?”^{lxix}

LS: This is, of course, a classic Hobbesian argument; and this is the way in which he disposes of the second reasoning discussed at the beginning of . . . first¹⁸ [a] rule derivative from force is impossible. Now, can political rule be derived from paternal power—second possibility—also rejected. And then the result is, rule can only be derived from contract; that’s the overall argument. In this particular passage, I thought it is important because it makes clear that self-preservation is mentioned here, all right; and everyone—of course if he is no longer a child—[is] the judge. And the reason given: because everyone is nearest to himself—the famous story, the fool is more interested in his self-preservation than the wise man can be in the fool’s self-preservation. The fool is much better off if *he* is the judge than if he has to go to the wise man to ask him for guidance. This tough, pedestrian argument of Hobbes is here implied, clearly.

Mr. Butterworth: The thing that I was trying to indicate is the¹⁹ [quantitative] differences, simply; that he goes over it so rapidly, whereas in the *Contract* it is brought up again and again, the idea of self-preservation.

LS: Naturally; but that, I would say, is perfectly intelligible, because we have been fed to this doctrine of self-preservation and *amour de soi* so much that if we don’t know it now, we will learn it never. That is, I think, not a difference. I admit and emphasize that it would be highly interesting to make a thorough comparison of these two statements of Rousseau and see what the differences are. Whether the results would be sufficiently interesting to justify a master’s thesis, for example—to speak in practical terms—I could not say without having done it. My general impression is that the chief difference is A) the silence about the legislator and B) the elaboration of the argument regarding international law, international relations, which has no parallel there.

Student: The one other thing that I thought was quite important was that Emile is not taught that he can, if he feels himself injured, if he and his fellows feel themselves [inaudible], that they can call back the government. Exactly the opposite.^{lxx} This I . . .

LS: You will remind us next time when we come to that passage. Only one more point, which we will take up again next time, on page 423 in the second paragraph from the bottom: “Passing then to the right of slavery.”

Mr. Reinken: “Taking next the law of slavery, we shall inquire whether a man can make over to another his right to himself, without restriction, without reserve, without any kind of conditions; that is to say, can he renounce his person, his life, his reason, his very self—”

LS: “his I,” “his ego,” “son moi.”

^{lxviii} The “sole natural judge.”

^{lxix} *E*, 838; 651.

^{lxx} *E*, 840-41; 652-53.

Mr. Reinken: “can he renounce all morality in his actions; in a word, can he cease to exist before his death, in spite of nature who places him directly in charge of his own preservation, in spite of reason and conscience which tell him what to do and what to leave undone?”^{lxxi}

LS: Yes, that is an extremely interesting passage, again because it refers back to this, only now the line is drawn differently [LS writes on the blackboard]: nature and reason and conscience belong together. Nature, you will see, has only to do with his proper conservation. It is an absolutely foolish act ever to make a contract of slavery, where you give away all power to preserve yourself, and hand it over to your master—that is simple and clear. And now the other point: conscience and reason—by the way, conscience is mentioned first here—conscience and reason, prescribing what he ought to do and from what he ought to abstain. This has to do with his reason; we can say with the dignity of man—let us put it this way. Here, there is no dignity of man involved: every beast would do it if it could think, I mean, not to get itself enslaved, obviously; because it is not conducive to self-preservation if someone else possesses all means of your self-preservation. It is a mad action, from a lowest and most solid point of view. Here, these are considerations of man’s morality and, as we can say, of man’s dignity. It is incompatible with man’s dignity to be a slave. These are obviously two *very* different reasons, and yet, thanks to the goodness of nature, both converge; both are equally incompatible with any right of slavery.

Now, this, I believe, has a general importance. Rousseau makes this distinction, and the distinction between nature, which has to do only with self-preservation, and reason on the one hand, and conscience on the other is not so easy to make, but it is somehow underlying the whole Rousseauan teaching. And yet there is a considerable agreement between—in the consequences following from nature and the consequences following from reason and from conscience. And therefore Rousseau is perfectly entitled to blur the difference for most practical purposes. But when it comes to the question of principles, the theoretical understanding, then it becomes necessary to make this distinction. Is this point clear? I mean, these three items which we have here found again, we have seen before when we discussed that; and this of course requires a very thorough study. And I believe the earlier remark is much clearer, because something It was illustrated to some extent, you know, where not succumbing to temptations was the characteristic example of conscience, whereas reason tells us that we should not will the impossible. By the way, I forgot to mention that the difference is obvious: if someone succumbs to temptation, he does not attempt the impossible, because succumbing is obviously possible; otherwise the whole distinction wouldn’t make sense. In other words, the reason as understood there is indeed not the same as nature, but it is surely not the same as morality proper. This I think one can Morality proper and virtue belong much more to conscience than to reason, I would say. But—we have still a lot to discuss, and while we surely will have the next meeting with Mr. Boyan reading the paper,²⁰ I hope we still have some time for a general discussion of the *Emile* as a whole.

END OF LECTURE

¹ Deleted “a kind of novel, and that’s, a kind of novel.”

² Deleted “are not. . . .”

^{lxxi} *E*, 839; 651.

³ Deleted “that.”

⁴ Deleted “that”

⁵ Deleted “sentiment of existence.”

⁶ Deleted “the. . .”

⁷ Deleted “and.”

⁸ Deleted “I mean.”

⁹ Deleted “don’t.”

¹⁰ Moved “all.”

¹¹ Deleted “he.”

¹² Deleted “he.”

¹³ Deleted “he is.”

¹⁴ Deleted “thing.”

¹⁵ Deleted “is.”

¹⁶ Deleted “he.”

¹⁷ Deleted “which has a more limited meaning.”

¹⁸ Deleted “is.”

¹⁹ Deleted “qualitative.”

²⁰ Deleted “but.”

Session 17

[In progress] **Leo Strauss:** —goodness is something which is not replaceable by virtue. Freedom, original freedom, is not identical with the freedom of the citizen. [Inaudible], which goes with the sentiment of existence; it is connected with it. But we will take this up later.

I have here prepared a long statement, a kind of summary, which we will discuss. But first, we must finish our discussion of last time's assignment, and we turn to that now. We were in the neighborhood of page 423, and we just read the passage which we may read again, on page 423: the second paragraph from the bottom; we have read this last time, but let us take up at this point.

Mr. Reinken: “Taking next the law of slavery, we shall inquire whether a man can make over to another his right to himself, without restriction, without reserve, without any kind of conditions; that is to say, can he renounce his person, his life, his reason, his very ego . . . in spite of reason and conscience—”

LS: The order is different: “conscience and reason.” So, conscience comes in the middle, this way, of the three things.

Mr. Reinken: “which tell him what to do and what to leave undone.”ⁱ

LS: Yes. Now we have seen before this distinction between nature, conscience, and reason; and here it is somewhat specified, what The concern with preservation belongs to nature; and conscience and reason have other [Preservation is] something to which we are by nature inclined, where we do not need a command of reason to do it. And the other things are—the fields are not distinguished, but both conscience and reason prescribe, command, and prohibit. Nature does not command and prohibit. This much is clear. Now, what we have to keep in mind is only this distinction between nature, reason and conscience, which we will take up later. We cannot read everything; let us turn to page 424, the third and fourth paragraphs.

Mr. Reinken: “Thus we are compelled to retrace our steps, and when we consider the meaning of this collective nation—”

LS: No, no: “this collective word ‘nation,’”ⁱⁱ “*ce mot collectif*.” Collective word, meaning a word designating a collective of beings.

Mr. Reinken: “we shall inquire whether some contract, a tacit contract at the least, is not required to make a nation, a contract anterior to that which we are assuming.”

LS: In other words, a contract prior to any possible contract with the government; the social contract by virtue of which a people comes into being.

ⁱ *E*, 839; 651.

ⁱⁱ In each case of “nation,” in Foxley here, the term is *peuple*.

Mr. Reinken: “Since the nation was a nation before it chose a king, what made it a nation, except the social contract? Therefore the social contract is the foundation of all civil society, and it is in the nature of this contract that we must seek the nature of the society formed by it.”ⁱⁱⁱ

LS: Yes, that is clear, and is exactly in correspondence with the teaching of the *Social Contract*. Let us read the next paragraph, please.

Mr. Reinken: “We will inquire into the meaning of this contract; may it not be fairly well expressed in this formula? As an individual every one of us contributes his goods, his person, his life,^{iv} to the common stock, under the supreme direction of the general will; while as a body we receive each member as an indivisible part of the whole.”^v

LS: This is, I think, literally the same as in the *Social Contract* 1, 6; or is there a slight difference?

Student: There are two important differences.

LS: What are those differences?

Student: The fact that it is, he says “his goods.”

LS: Yes, the goods are not in and the life is not in.^{vi} But one could of course say that this is implied. The *Social Contract* reads, “Every one of us puts into common his whole person and his whole power under the supreme direction of the general will, and we receive as a body each member as an indivisible part of the whole.”^{vii} Now, you see, the difference is this: there he said—in the *Social Contract*—his *whole* person; and here he said his goods, his person, his life. Now that, his whole person can be said to comprise.

Student: The question I had [is] can you have goods before society?

LS: Yes, in a precarious manner, as he makes clear.

Student: He carries this on in the *Emile*, where he mentions goods when he comes to eminent domain [in the *Social Contract*],^{viii} whereas he did not mention it [in *Emile*]. It’s probably a secondary question, but he is at least consistent in the *Emile* in that he didn’t put it in.

LS: What did he not put in? The difference of the character of property in the state of nature and in the civil state?

ⁱⁱⁱ *E*, 839; 651-62.

^{iv} “and all his power,” which Foxley does not translate.

^v *E*, 840; 652.

^{vi} See Rousseau, 1994, 1.6, p. 138.

^{vii} A mistranslation: it is not “his whole person and his whole power” but “sa personne et tout sa puissance” (“his person and his whole power.”).

^{viii} In Book 1, Chapter 9.

Student: It's not spelled out the same way in the *Emile* as it is in the *Contract*.

LS: Yes, but he had to summarize; he had to omit. And the question is only whether he omitted something of absolutely central character. This is not . . . one can rightly say that it is not central, although it is of course very important. Let us turn to, on the same page, the second paragraph from bottom.

Mr. Reinken: "We shall note that this contract of association includes a mutual pledge on the part of the public and the individual; and that each individual, entering, so to speak, into a contract with himself, finds himself in a twofold capacity, i.e., as a member of the sovereign with regard to others—"

LS: "to the particulars," to the individuals.

Mr. Reinken: "as a member of the state with regard to the sovereign."^{ix}

LS: Yes. This is like the first paragraph of Chapter 7, the first part of the *Social Contract*. Page 425, paragraph 5.

Mr. Reinken: "Having compared natural and civil liberty with regard to persons, we will compare them as to property, the rights of ownership and the rights of sovereignty,^x the private and the common domain."

LS: "the particular domain and the eminent domain," he says.

Mr. Reinken: "If the sovereign power rests upon the right of ownership, there is no right more worthy of respect—"

LS: This is, of course 100 percent Locke, this statement.

Mr. Reinken: "it is inviolable and sacred for the sovereign power, so long as it remains a private individual right; as soon as it is viewed as common to all the citizens, it is subject to the common^{xi} will, and this will may destroy it. Thus the sovereign has no right to touch the property of one or many: but he may lawfully take possession of the property of all, as was done in Sparta in the time of Lycurgus; while the abolition of debts by Solon was an unlawful [deed]^{xii}."^{xiii}

LS: Yes: "an illegitimate act." Now, this seems clearer than the corresponding statement in the *Social Contract*, but it is not different; it is only clearer. Compare especially Part 2, Chapter 4 of the *Social Contract*, in the third paragraph there, where he says, "One agrees that that which each

^{ix} *E*, 840; 652.

^x "We will compare, as they regard possessions (*biens*), the right of property with the right of sovereignty, the individual's domain with eminent domain."

^{xi} "the general will"

^{xii} I deleted "act," to go with the Foxley translation, which the reader otherwise follows here.

^{xiii} *E*, 841; 653.

alienates by the social contract of his power, his goods, his liberty, is *only* the part of all this the use of which is important to the community.” In other words, you do not strictly speaking surrender *everything*; only what the community, what is useful to the community. “*But* one must also agree that the sovereign alone is judge of that importance.” So if you say, you, the state, you don’t need that, this kind of thing, you don’t have a right You may have something to say about roads going through my land, but goats are none of your business; that you are not entitled to say. The sovereign in his wisdom may feel that goats are terribly important, for, well, I don’t know what reason: perhaps they have to hire Hindu troops and must feed them—you know, a great problem in the First World War. So, only the sovereign can be the judge of it.

This is in principle the same as in the *Social Contract*: What does the distinction between Lycurgus and Solon mean here? It is a very important thing in times of present-day affairs. The abolition of debts: that means simply that a *part* of the citizens, the creditors, are deprived of their property to the benefit of the debtors. This is an illegitimate act, because here the law does not speak about *all* citizens, but makes an invidious distinction between the creditors and debtors. But if the sovereign says everyone has to surrender all his property to society, this is not illegitimate, do you see? This is important.

Student: The great theme of the *Federalist*.

LS: In which sense? I don’t remember that; can you state it?

Student: The question of credit or of creditor-debtor relationship was

LS: Oh, yes; this I remember. So, in other words, communism can in itself be legitimate, but this kind of taking away

Student: The welfare state isn’t legitimate.^{xiv}

LS: Yes. It is sometimes, of course, very hard to draw the line, because it is very easy to break the law without using the words creditors and debtors. I suppose a good lawyer can do that easily. And, for example, progressive income taxes, no names occurred, as you know.

Mr. Butterworth: Are you going to come back to the paragraph a little bit ahead of that?

LS: No,¹ [I] did not plan, but what is . . . ?

Mr. Butterworth: “The two parties contracting, that is to say each particular and the public, having no common superior who can judge their differences, so that we will examine if each one of the two remains master to break the contract when it pleases him, that is to say that he renounce to it on his behalf as soon as he believes himself to be injured.”^{xv}

^{xiv} Probably an unwarranted inference. Rousseau plainly favored laws, like sumptuary laws, that would have a disparate impact.

^{xv} *E*, 840; 652. Mr. Butterworth is translating on the fly.

It's about five paragraphs ahead of where you just read. It was my impression that this, and the one immediately following it, state a problem that was brought up in the *Contract* and solve it contrary to the way it was solved in the *Contract*.

LS: How does he solve it here, and how does he solve it in the *Social Contract*?

Mr. Butterworth: When you get done with this, it seems that you cannot renounce to the pact, here in the *Emile*, if you believe yourself to be injured.

LS: Yes; but this is not different

Mr. Butterworth: And in the *Contract*, in the eighteenth chapter of the third book, there are two paragraphs where the people can come together and decide whether or not to keep the government^{xvi}

LS: The *people*; but not the individual. In other words, the sovereign assembled may dissolve the civil society; but not an individual.

Mr. Butterworth: Well, he says that if an individual can leave, why cannot the whole . . . ?^{xvii}

LS: Yes, but again, this is a different case: then he, after he has fulfilled all his obligations to civil society, there is a right of emigration.

Mr. Butterworth: But not here.

LS: Yes, but one could say this is a detail not of such an utmost importance, that he could . . . I mean, in other words, from the mere silence of the summary here, you cannot infer that Rousseau has abandoned the corresponding doctrine of the *Social Contract*.

Mr. Butterworth: It's my thought that the silence is purposeful, in that the implication—you know, showing that there should be no way of getting out if you feel yourself injured—is purposeful because of the fact that Rousseau doesn't want *Emile* to have this idea

LS: That is possible; in this particular case it is possible. One has to see it. But² . . . that needs some argument, because the overall reason that he has to omit, say, 90 percent of the *Social Contract* is a good explanation [of most omissions], perhaps sufficient for all cases; because one could rightly say, for example, the point to which we will come later, that the legislator is not mentioned—*Social Contract*, Part 2, Chapter 7—can also be well defended because this is a doctrine of no practical importance—although of the utmost theoretical importance—and could very well be omitted in such a summary.

Mr. Butterworth: Isn't this, though, contingent on one fact, that you're basing it on the fact that this is a summary, whereas I would say that there is an equal reason to wonder if it *is* a summary,

^{xvi} Rousseau, 1994, 3.18, pp. 196-97.

^{xvii} Although Rousseau seems to endorse this view, it's worth noting that he puts it in Grotius's mouth, not his own.

since he first says that *most* of the statements are extracted from the work, which doesn't [suggest a mere summary], and then he adds things that were not in the *Contract* at all, which makes you wonder what kind of summary it is that adds

LS: Yes, but again, I have no—I would be delighted if you would write a study, a comparison and go into every detail; and perhaps we can learn something from it. I can only say offhand I do not believe it is a very rewarding thing. But that is a³ mere opinion. But what you said—how did you phrase it, as Rousseau himself puts it; you seemed to quote him—what he says about the character of this summary.

Mr. Butterworth: He says “extracts from the *Social Contract*, which is itself a summary of a large work, abandoned because it was too great for my powers.”^{xviii}..

LS: Yes, “extracts.” An extract is, of course, something like a summary, isn't it? I mean, when you say extract, you imply you omit very much, and⁴ then one can assume that a reasonable extract extracts the most important things, or, if you want to be more precise, most important for Emile; and then you have a formula for that.

Mr. Butterworth: [Inaudible] simply on the qualifier of “extract”: “the most,” or “*la plupart extraites*.”

LS: Oh, he says that; I am sorry. Then you have a much stronger case. Where is that?

Student: This is a note at the bottom of the next paragraph

Mr. Butterworth: “*Ces questions et propositions sont la plupart extraites*.”

LS: Yes; oh, then you are . . . yes. Very good.

Student: Does that mean mostly, or for the most part?

LS: For the most part. Very good; I mean, I give in. So, make⁵ this inquiry.

Mr. Butterworth: Then the next statement seems to contradict it, because it says, “this is the summary of it”: “*et dont c'est ici le sommaire*.”

LS: Let me now read for one moment. Yes, but still, since “summary” is I mean, I would say that the first statement to which you drew my attention is more specific than the second, and therefore I would regard it as decisive—no, by all means. But we have also to consider this great thing, time, now.

Student: Could I just [note] in support of Mr. Butterworth in a way, on page 438, when he talks of duties of Emile, he sort of follows up this point about the love of the native land, and he⁶ says, “There are circumstances in which a man may be of more use to his fellow-countrymen outside his country than within it. Then he should listen only to his own zeal and should bear his exile

^{xviii} E, 842-43; 654.

without a murmur; that exile is one of his duties.”^{xix} Now, that doesn’t strictly imply he may never leave, but it does

LS: Yes, but Rousseau admits the right of emigration, the natural right of emigration, that is all we need here; that he admits in the *Social Contract*. In other words, if you try to emigrate on the day where war is declared, you are not free to do so; or if you have not paid your taxes; but in normal times there is the right to emigrate, and that means, of course, in all probability you will have to undergo exactly the same burdens in another country.

Student: Yes, I’m not denying that he admits it, but it’s sort of, in this book at least, by implication rather than

LS: Well, I still say, until we have the study of Mr. Butterworth, I would still say let us not be pedantic, and let us assume that it is really a summary.

Student: In this paragraph, the meaning of exile is made plain with a beautiful sentence when he says, “But you, dear Emile, you have not undertaken the painful task of telling men the truth; you must live in the midst of your fellow-creatures.”^{xx}

LS: Ah, you see: so that’s Rousseau’s privilege, not his. But let us really proceed now in a somewhat more orderly fashion. Page 426, paragraphs 4 and 5, where he explains briefly what a law is. “On the contrary, when the whole people stipulates regarding the whole people.”

Mr. Reinken: Oh, at the top. “On the other hand, if a whole people makes a law for a whole people, if the whole nation makes a law for the whole nation, it is only considering itself; and if a relation is set up, it is between the whole community regarded from one point of view, and the whole community regarded from another point of view, without any division of that whole. Then the object of the statute is general, and the will which makes that statute is general too. Let us see if there is any other kind of decree which may bear the name of law.”^{xxi}

LS: Yes, and this The answer is no other decree; no other decree except that. When the whole people establishes something regarding the whole people—for example, forbids murder, with such and such a penalty—of course for *all* equally. If it would say, well, if murder is committed by a nobleman, he will have this punishment and a commoner will have that, that’s not a law. And the only difficulty is that there are sometimes laws being perfectly general in character but hurting some people much more than others. The famous example of Anatole France which everyone knows: “The law forbids the rich and the poor with equal severity to beg in the streets and to sleep under bridges.” And that is perfectly law in Rousseau’s sense, and yet one can say it hurts certain people much more than others. And this of course, leads, if thought through, to a reopening of the whole issue of Rousseau’s definition of a law, which he tried to avoid by limiting his doctrine to a homogeneous society; in other words, a society in which there are no beggars and which everyone has a roof over his head, the whole issue wouldn’t arise. And the difficulty is only that there are heterogeneities in every society, of one kind or another, except

^{xix} E, 858; 667-68.

^{xx} E, 859; 668.

^{xxi} E, 842; 654.

very primitive tribal societies. Well, we cannot possibly read everything. Let us turn to page 428, paragraph 4.

Mr. Reinken: “To make this principle clearer we will distinguish three essentially different wills in the person of each magistrate; first, his own will as an individual, which looks to his own advantage only; secondly, the common will of the magistrates, which is concerned only with the advantage of the prince, a will which may be called corporate, and one which is general in relation to the government and particular in relation to the state of which the government forms part; thirdly, the will of the people, or the sovereign will, which is general, as much in relation to the state viewed as the whole as in relation to the government viewed as a part of the whole. In a perfect legislature the private individual will should be almost nothing; the corporate will belonging to the government should be quite subordinate, and therefore the general and sovereign will is the master of all the others. On the other hand, in the natural order, these different wills become more and more active in proportion as they become centralized—”

LS: “concentrated.”

Mr. Reinken: “the general will is always weak, the corporate will takes the second place, the individual will is preferred to all; so that every one is himself first, then a magistrate, and then a citizen; a series just the opposite of that required by the social order.”^{xxii}

LS: You see here, the natural order, the social order are opposite. And this shows the radical artificiality of civil society and how the problem comes up. The context is this: here he has made in the meantime the distinction between the sovereign, the legislative assembly of the whole citizen body, and the government. And now, the more specific political problem concerns the relation of the sovereign to government, because the government develops an interest of its own. Well, [this is] very clear in the case of a monarchy: the prince is not the people. But even if you have a republican form of government, regardless of whether this is heredity or whether they are elected, they develop an interest of their own. The politicians have a kind of corporate interest which is not identical with the interest of the citizen at large. Of course you can affect this by having very short tenures of office, but still the problem always exists. And now, the point is this: the government is inevitably stronger than the amorphous mass which assembles—even if it assembles a few times a year, it is not comparable in concentrated power to the government—and within the government each member’s selfishness is stronger than the corporate will: that is the general schema. Now, what follows from that? Then he gives a very general rule. Do you remember that, what the rule is, the proportion which he establishes? [Blackboard.] [Inaudible.] This is the people and this is the government.

Student: The people as a mass and the government . . .

LS: I mean, the people as the many, not as a unit of the sovereignty. This is always one, the sovereign; and the government, let us call this *x*, because we don’t know. And now if you put here, say, one hundred, the government has to be much weaker than if you have here a million. Can you do it? You are our mathematician.

^{xxii} *E*, 845; 656-57.

Student: That since the power of a body, whether it be the people or the government or the sovereign, is inversely proportional to their numbers, he concludes that to get the power matched, with a larger people you must have a smaller governor.

LS: Or weaker government, let us say. Or express it in . . . in other words, for ruling, if the sovereign consists of one hundred citizens, you need a much weaker government than if the sovereign consists of ten millions. And the larger the nation, the more centralized a government you need. And therefore democracy proper is possible only in small societies; and when you go beyond a certain stage, only monarchy is possible. You know, that argument which the *Federalist Papers* still had to refute in order to show that a large-scale republic is possible. I mean, the thesis itself is of course Montesquieu's, and even older, but in this precise form it is Rousseau's own, as far as I know.

Student: May I just raise one question here?⁷ [Admitting] that the monarch, that the smaller number of rulers is for the greater number of people: does the smaller number of rulers necessarily mean weaker power?

LS: Stronger power.

Student: But you just said . . .

LS: Then I must have made a mistake. No, on the contrary, that the government personnel must consist of many when you have a large nation, that is uninteresting; but all these people, the officials, derive their authority from that single pen, the pen of the monarch. So therefore, the power is absolutely concentrated in one hand. But if you have a smaller nation, then a republican form of government might do; and if it is a very small nation—in other words, a kind of small city—then democracy would do.

Student: Isn't it true that his mathematical proportion fails mathematically, and isn't that perhaps important?

LS: Yes, it would be important; but show it.

Student: Well, if he says that there's an inverse proportion of government to people as taken in a mass, and government to sovereign as taken as one; if you have one hundred people then the government is ten, the people as a sovereign is one: one hundred to ten to one.

LS: Now, we can easily figure it out.

Student: I have read it through with great care, but I do not remember . . . I was impressed by the mathematical consistency of, good sense of his reasoning, which I never expected to find.

LS: No, no, Rousseau was very well informed in mathematical things. So, let us take a small state, one hundred citizens. [LS writes on the blackboard] Now, what is the value of x then?

Student: Ten.

LS: Yes, the root of one hundred; good. And then in a million?

Student: It would have to be one.

LS: And what is the interesting proportion now?

Student: Doesn't it have to be that, if you take ten million, and then according to Rousseau's premise, it has to be one. It has to be a monarch.

LS: No, two examples are perfectly sufficient. Now here, what is the crucial point? Ten are a much larger part of one hundred than a thousand a part of a million, that's the point; and everything else follows from that. You can have a large body of rulers in a small state. The larger the state becomes, the more must the power be concentrated. Well, it is of course not fully stateable in mathematical terms, because you never get really one; or at least only in a terrifically You have to go very high for that.

Student: Yes; he spoke first of the ratio of the powers. But the powers are inverse to the numbers for any particular object, such as the government. In a given society a larger government is weaker in absolute terms.

LS: In a larger society . . . ?

Student: In a given society, if you expand the number of government, if you make parliament bigger, parliament will be less effective.

LS: So in other words, the desirable and wise thing is to make the government stronger in a larger society. The larger the government Yes, sure.

Student: Isn't the perfect number—I have spent some time moving around in numbers—just the one, one, and one?

LS: That is a wonderful mathematical possibility, but of course no longer interesting for political science, because it would be a society consisting of a single man. It would be very useful for Robinson Crusoe prior to the appearance of Friday.

Student: But I'm wondering I mean, in the sense of power and freedom, how much better . . . that in a way, I mean, without Rousseau meaning it as a serious suggestion for future rule.

LS: No, the principle he means seriously; and the principle is, the larger the state, the more powerful must the government be.

Student: *Must* the government be; it doesn't mean that the citizens will be happier by that.

Student: Yes, I know

LS: On the contrary, in his view they will be unhappier, but . . .

Student: But that's what I was bringing in, this question of happiness. Because then you'd need a smaller state; and in a way, it would seem just mathematically, I mean without any intention of this as a practical suggestion for government, but the only real happiness is where there's one, one, and one.

LS: In a way, he says so. I mean, to that extent . . . I see how what you're driving at: the perfect solution is the absolutely solitary man. Well, we have heard this more than once, that's true. But I thought you were still considering within political terms proper; there it would be inapplicable, as I am sure you know. Then there is—well, we cannot possibly read everything—then there comes this discussion of what the sign of good government is; that's on page 432. There are many more things of interest. Pardon?

Student: I notice that China is an exception to the rule the more people the better.

LS: Yes; but it is of course a fatal exception. No, I mean, because in case of these matters, how does he . . . He would have to explain it, which he doesn't do. Let us see on page 432, paragraph 3.

Mr. Reinken: "The necessary relations between character and government have been so clearly pointed out in the book of *L'Esprit des Lois*—"

LS: He doesn't quote here the author; that's quite interesting. When he had spoken of Montesquieu he didn't mention the *Esprit des Lois*.^{xxiii} Perhaps this is in deference to the anonymity of the book: it appeared anonymously in 1748.

Student: But he certainly identified the author with the general trend of the book when he first [inaudible].

LS: That he did. But on the other hand it is not literally the same; go into, consider it from the point of view of penal law and you will see the difference. Now, go on.

Mr. Reinken: "so clearly pointed out in the book of *L'Esprit des Lois*, that one cannot do better than have recourse to that work for the study of those relations. But speaking generally, there are two plain and simple standards by which to decide whether governments are good or bad. One is the population. Every country in which the population is decreasing is on its way to ruin; and the countries in which the population increases most rapidly, even were they the poorest countries in the world, are certainly are certainly the best governed."^{xxiv}

With the exception of China.

LS: We must read also the next paragraph.

^{xxiii} Preserving Foxley's rendition of *De l'Esprit des Loix*.

^{xxiv} *E*, 850-51; 661.

Mr. Reinken: “But this population must be the natural result of the government and the national character,^{xxv} for if it is caused by colonisation or any other temporary and accidental cause, then the remedy itself is evidence of the disease. When Augustus passed laws against celibacy, those laws showed that the Roman empire was already beginning to decline.”

LS: Because the citizens had no urge in themselves. Yes.

Mr. Reinken: “Citizens must be induced to marry by the goodness of the government, not compelled to marry by law; you must not examine the effects of force, for the law which strives against the constitution has little or no effect; you should study what is done by the influence of public morals and by the natural inclination of the government, for these alone produce a lasting effect. It was the policy of the worthy Abbé de Saint-Pierre always to look for a little remedy for every individual ill, instead of tracing them to their common source and seeing if they could not all be cured together. You do not need to treat separately every sore on a rich man's body; you should purify the blood which produces them. They say that in England there are prizes for agriculture; that is enough for me; that is proof enough that agriculture will not flourish there much longer.”^{xxvi}

LS: He was right, for very different reasons. Now this is, I think, the Rousseau of the legend; you know, as the Rousseau . . . one sweeping statement—there is *one* sign of good government, everyone can see that: whether the population increases. And then no little remedies, but one sweeping thing, that means, of course, to quote Joseph Stalin, complete revolution. But this is of course only an ingredient of Rousseau's whole doctrine, and not the full Rousseau; but one can understand it on the basis of such utterances. He is understood in the way in which he is frequently understood. Now, there follow in the sequel some interesting statements which we might consider briefly. On page 432, bottom.

Mr. Reinken: “The second sign of the goodness or badness of the government and the laws is also to be found in the population, but it is to be found not in its numbers but in its distribution. Two states equal in size and population may be very unequal in strength; and the more powerful is always that in which the people are more evenly distributed over its territory; the country which has fewer large towns,^{xxvii} and makes less show on this account, will always defeat the other. It is the great towns which exhaust the state and are the cause of its weakness; the wealth which they produce is a sham wealth, there is much money and few goods.^{xxviii} They say the town of Paris is worth a whole province to the King of France; for my own part I believe it costs him more than several provinces. I believe that Paris is fed by the provinces in more senses than one, and that the greater part of their revenues is poured into that town and stays there, without ever returning to the people or to the king.”^{xxix}

^{xxv} “[N]ational character” is Foxley's translation for *moeurs* in this context. She translates it also as “public morals” later in the paragraph.

^{xxvi} *E*, 851; 661.

^{xxvii} “The one which does not have such large towns.”

^{xxviii} “Much money and little effect.”

^{xxix} *E*, 851-52; 661-62.

LS: Now, let us read the beginning of the next paragraph and the end.

Mr. Reinken: “Study the nation outside its towns; thus only will you really get to know it.”

LS: And the end of that.

Mr. Reinken: “Now it is the agricultural districts—”

LS: “the land, the countryside.”

Mr. Reinken: “which form the nation, and the country people who make the people.”^{xxx}

LS: Well, you see here the connection with Jefferson: agricultural democracy; that’s clearly what is meant. Now Mr. Boyan.

Mr. Boyan: All I wanted was to give a possible explanation for the exception of China. In that paragraph where we just read, when he is talking in the context of the big cities and the crowds, he talks of, “the ill-regulated addition of still more people gives a negative result.” That might be a possible explanation⁸ [of] the exception.^{xxx}

LS: It could also be perhaps the fact that this increase of the population was due to government policy in China; that could also be. So, now in the next paragraph, he states the principle underlying agricultural democracy.

Mr. Reinken: “This study of different nations in their remoter provinces, and in the simplicity of their native genius, gives a general result which is very satisfactory, to my thinking,^{xxxii} and very consoling to the human heart; it is this: All the nations, if you observe them in this fashion, seem much better worth observing;^{xxxiii} the nearer they are to nature, the more does goodness hold sway in their character; it is only when they are cooped up in towns, it is only when they are changed by cultivation, that they become depraved, that certain faults which were rather coarse than injurious are exchanged for pleasant but pernicious vices.”^{xxxiv}

LS: Yes; in other words, the agricultural democracy is more natural—most natural—and therefore the most healthy, the most good. Now we read a few more paragraphs before we turn to the summary. On page 425, in the fourth paragraph.

Mr. Reinken: “But it is time we finished. Let us take Mr. John—”

^{xxx} *E*, 852; 662.

^{xxx} The note about the China exception students have been referring to which appears in earlier manuscripts was not included in the published version, but Foxley retained the footnote. Kelly explains at 760, n. 71.

^{xxxii} “to my epigraph,” namely Emile’s epigraph, from Seneca: “We are sick with evils that can be cured, and nature, having brought us forth sound, itself helps us if we wish to be improved” (*E*, 239; 155).

^{xxxiii} Not “much better worth observing” but simply “much better.”

^{xxxiv} *E*, 852-53; 662-63.

LS: “Lord John.” Well, it’s not terribly important.

Mr. Reinken: “back to Miss Lucy, or rather Emile to Sophie.”

LS: This is only strange in the translation, because Lord is in the French text, so it isn’t too difficult to translate this into English.

Mr. Reinken: “He brings her a heart as tender as ever, and a more enlightened mind, and he returns to his native land all the better for having made acquaintance with foreign governments through their vices and foreign nations through their virtues.”

LS: “the peoples.” “People” has a somewhat different connotation than “nation” has. “People,” you think of the common people in the first place, which you do not necessarily do when you speak of nations. Yes.

Mr. Reinken: “I have even taken care that he should associate himself with some man of worth in every nation, by means of a treaty of hospitality after the fashion of the ancients, and I shall not be sorry if this acquaintance is kept up by means of letters. Not only may this be useful, not only is it always pleasant to have a correspondent in foreign lands, it is also an excellent antidote against the sway of patriotic prejudices—”

LS: “national prejudices,” he says. In other words, Rousseau favors national characters, but not national prejudices, which is a different thing. Yes; now read on.

Mr. Reinken: “to which we are liable all through our life, and to which sooner or later we are more or less enslaved. Nothing is better calculated to lessen the hold of such prejudices than a friendly interchange of opinions with sensible people whom we respect; they are free from our prejudices and we find ourselves face to face with theirs, and so we can set the one set of prejudices against the other and be safe from both. It is not the same thing to have to do with strangers in our own country and in theirs. In the former case there is always a certain amount of politeness which either makes them conceal their real opinions, or makes them think more favorably of our country while they are with us; when they get home again this disappears, and they merely do us justice. I should be very glad if the foreigner I consult has seen my country, but I shall not ask what he thinks of it till he is at home again.”^{xxxv}

LS: Does this remind you of something, well-known to all of you, but most of those who were not born and brought up in this country? Well, the American habit of asking visitors, foreigners, how do you like this country. I don’t believe the habit exists in any other country; at least I haven’t come across it.

Student: The Japanese.

LS: Do they do it? I did not know.

Student: The French.

^{xxxv} E, 855; 664-65.

LS: French, too? Perhaps after the Second World War; but I haven't seen it in France in my time. But there is something to that. Now, what are the conclusions which Emile draws from his travels? Page 436, the passage following the Latin verse, the Horatian verse.

Mr. Reinken: "I remember that my property was the origin of our inquiries. You argued very forcibly^{xxxvi} that I could not keep both my wealth and my liberty; but when you wished me to be free and at the same time without needs, you desired two incompatible things, for I could only be independent of men by returning to dependence on nature. What then shall I do with the fortune bequeathed to me by my parents? To begin with, I will not be dependent on it; I will cut myself loose from all the ties which bind me to it; if it is left in my hands, I shall keep it; if I am deprived of it, I shall not be dragged away with it. I shall not trouble myself to keep it, but I shall keep steadfastly to my own place. Rich or poor, I shall be free. I shall be free not merely in this country or in that; I shall be free in any part of the world. All the chains of prejudice are broken; as far as I am concerned I know only the bonds of necessity. I have been trained to endure them from my childhood, and I shall endure them until death, for I am a man; and why should I not wear those chains as a free man, for I should have to wear them even if I were a slave, together with the additional fetters of slavery?"^{xxxvii}

LS: So in other words, that is extremely Stoic, isn't it, and has Political arrangements are of no importance whatever for the true freedom of man. One has only a choice between dependence on man and dependence on nature, between the chains of opinion and the chains of necessity. The chains of necessity we must wear under all conditions: we must die. But of the chains of opinions we can be free everywhere. And therefore it wouldn't seem to make any difference. But let us read the paragraph after the next.

Mr. Reinken: "'My father, this is my decision.'"

LS: Who is the father whom he addresses?

Student: Rousseau.

LS: Yes.

Mr. Reinken: "'But for my passions, I should be in my manhood independent as God himself, for I only desire what is and I should never fight against fate. At least, there is only one chain, a chain which I shall ever wear, a chain of which I may be justly proud. Come then, give me my Sophie, and I am free.'"^{xxxviii}

LS: Yes; that's, of course, the hitch, because . . . here is where bondage nevertheless enters, and is the difference between Rousseau and Emile, we notice here. You see, willing only what is—we have read the statement formerly, everything that is is good; in a way that's the same thing. I mean, willing⁹ what is, meaning—implies that, in a way, at least, that everything that is is good.

^{xxxvi} "proved very solidly."

^{xxxvii} *E*, 856; 666.

^{xxxviii} *E*, 857; 666.

Now, this is a speech of Emile; and Rousseau replies to him: you must become husband and father. And what does this imply? On page 437, in the second paragraph.

Student: Mr. Strauss, do you draw any conclusions from this beginning statement that you called our attention to there: “My father”?

LS: No, I think . . . Had he ever said that before?

Student: The only thing, in this passage, in this thing that we’ve been dealing on the last few days, Rousseau earlier said to Emile, “*mon enfant*”; but that’s much different from saying “my son.” This is the only thing that could be a parallel to it that I’ve seen so far; and I wondered if this—

LS: No, he’s, after all, no longer, definitely no longer an infant, or a child: he is about to marry. But still, that it is now that he calls Rousseau his father I think shows the radical change which has been effected. Let us read the second half of the next paragraph.

Mr. Reinken: “‘Where is there¹⁰ any law? Where is there any respect for law? Under the name of law you have everywhere seen the rule of self-interest and human passion. But the eternal laws of nature and of order exist. For the wise man they take the place of positive Law—’”

LS: What is the text here? Because there must be a printing error in mine. “*Elles tiennent lieu de loi positive*”—“*pour le sage*”?

Student: “*au sage*.”

LS: “*au sage*.” Thank you. Here, it is “*et*,” which doesn’t make sense.

Student: Is it possible that Emile’s reference to “my father” is an indication of his having lost sight of the natural [inaudible] now?

LS: The natural. . . ?

Student: Of a natural, even the natural relation now.

LS: That is not a bad point. In other words, he is, after all, not his natural father, and . . . that is a good point. But this needs of course a long interpretation, because it could also mean that he sees this relationship which exists between him and Rousseau as much more deserving the name of son/father than that of a natural son. It could also mean that. Yes, read on.

Mr. Reinken: “For the wise man they take the place of positive law; they are written in the depths of his heart by conscience and reason; let him obey these laws and be free; for there is no slave but the evil-doer, for he always does evil against his will. Liberty is not to be found in any form of government, she is in the heart of the free man, he bears her with him everywhere. The

vile man bears his slavery in himself; the one would be a slave in Geneva, the other free in Paris.”^{xxxix}

LS: This only emphasizes how irrelevant politics is. That’s very strange for the author of the *Social Contract*, but when you read the first paragraph of the *Social Contract*—man is everywhere in chains, and it is only the difference between legitimate and illegitimate chains—then it makes sense. What is much more important in the context of the *Emile* is that Rousseau now accepts absolutely the teaching—the moral teaching, at any rate—of the Savoyard Vicar, as you see here; there is no difference involved. Rousseau confirms Emile in the principle, liberty is under no form of government, and he reminds him of the eternal laws of nature and of order, i.e. of conscience and reason, by submitting to which one becomes truly free. So there is . . . A perfect harmony is established at the end of the work. We must now first finish that, if you don’t mind. Page 437, in the third paragraph.

Mr. Reinken: “‘If I spoke to you of the duties of a citizen, you would perhaps ask me, “Which is my country?” And you would think you had put me to confusion. Yet you would be mistaken, dear Emile, for he who has no country has, at least, the land in which he lives.’”

LS: Here clearly it doesn’t have a fatherland; there is at least a land.

Mr. Reinken: “There is always a government and certain so-called laws under which he has lived in peace. What matter though the social contract has not been observed, if he has been protected by private interest against the general will^{xl}, if he has been secured by public violence against private aggressions, if the evil he has beheld has taught him to love the good, and if our institutions themselves have made him perceive and hate their own iniquities? Oh, Emile, where is the man who owes nothing to the land in which he lives? Whatever that land may be, he owes to it the most precious thing possessed by man, the morality of his actions and the love of virtue. Born in the depths of a forest he would have lived in greater happiness and freedom; but being able to follow his inclinations without a struggle there would have been no merit in his goodness, he would not have been virtuous, as he may be now, in spite of his passions. The mere sight of order—”

LS: “the mere appearance of order,” in other words, a sham order, even.

Mr. Reinken: “‘The mere semblance of order teaches him to know and love it. The public good, which to others is a mere pretext, is a real motive for him. He learns to fight against himself and to prevail, to sacrifice his own interest to the common weal. It is not true that he gains nothing from the laws; they give him courage to be just, even in the midst of the wicked. It is not true that they have failed to make him free; they have taught him to rule himself.’”^{xli}

LS: So in other words, Rousseau now returns completely to the ordinary morality. Submission to the government, however bad. One owes to one’s country the morality of his actions and the love of virtue—not to nature: in the state of nature, it would not exist. So this harmony which Mr.

^{xxxix} *E*, 857-58; 666-67.

^{xl} “as he would have been protected by the general will.”

^{xli} *E*, 858; 667.

Boyan painted for us is here, without any question, achieved. Yet we are now reminded however of the difference between Emile and Rousseau in the next paragraph.

Mr. Reinken: “Do not say therefore, ‘What matter where I am?’ It does matter that you should be where you can best do your duty; and one of these duties is to love your native land. Your fellow-countrymen protected you in childhood; you should love them in your manhood. You should live among them, or at least you should live where you can serve them to the best of your power, and where they know where to find you if ever they are in need of you. There are circumstances in which a man may be of more use to his fellow-countrymen outside his country than within it. Then he should listen only to his own zeal and should bear his exile without a murmur; that exile is one of his duties. But you, dear Emile, you have not undertaken the painful task of telling men the truth, you must live in the midst of your fellow-creatures, cultivating their friendship in pleasant intercourse; you must be their benefactor, their pattern; your example will do more than all our books, and the good they see you do will touch them more deeply than all our empty words.”^{xlii}

LS: Yes: “empty speeches.” So here it is made clear. The implication of this harmony is the complete, the unqualified inferiority of the way of life of Rousseau to the way of life of Emile. And if this were Rousseau’s final word about that, there would be no problem; but since there are reasons to doubt that this is Rousseau’s final word, there are reasons to doubt the simplicity of the harmony achieved at the end of the *Emile*.

Student: [Inaudible] simply that no Emile without a Rousseau to make him so?

LS: Now wait; let us proceed To what extent would the fact that there is no Emile without Jean-Jacques prove that the way of life of Emile is inferior to the way of life of Rousseau?

Student: Well, it is dependent on it, for one thing.

LS: Yes, but a condition may very well be inferior to the *conditioned*: that which makes possible something else may very well be inferior to it. Simple example: the bridle-maker. No horseman without a bridle, and so horsemanship is based on the art of bridle-making; and yet bridle-making is ministerial to horsemanship. So in other words, the art—if we call that what Rousseau does, loosely, philosophy—philosophy may be a mere means for bringing about that virtuous citizen life which not Rousseau but Emile leads. That would not be in itself decisive.

Student: When he says, the writing of treatises—

LS: Even that

Student: the writing of textbooks, he has shown, is inferior to being Emile.

LS: To being Emile, although there could not be an Emile without some textbooks.

Student: But he has not said that Emile would be superior to Jean-Jacques.

^{xlii} *E*, 858-59; 667-68.

LS: He has said it here: “our vain words of our books.”

Mr. Reinken: But his words haven’t been empty. He has not been writing a book. In this story, he hasn’t been writing a book; he has been educating a man.

LS: But still, here Rousseau brings out the fact in his final address to Emile that he is primarily an author. And even his being the tutor of Emile is, if we have a bit common sense, entirely a bookish affair. I mean, this is a novel, so to speak; it is not an account.

Mr. Reinken: I’m trying to argue that this is like the dialogues. A book that wasn’t quite a book; or writing without the sins of writing.

LS: Yes, Mr. Reinken; it is very nice to be subtle, but one must also dissolve the subtlety into clear and distinct propositions, if you know what I mean. And everything in its time. No, that is clear. In other words, if you want, if your subtlety amounts to the effect that this is not Rousseau’s serious last word upon the situation, I entirely agree with you. But we have first to take it at what it says. Now, one more word about the end of the *Emile*, because then we will have a brief discussion, and then I will give my summary.

The end deals then with the question of which there is here a large literature in modern times, how married people should live together from the point of view of sexual comfort; one could say an *ars amandi* for married people—and he gives advice which convinces Sophie more easily than it convinces Emile. But this we don’t have to discuss.

Student: I thought it was one of the most political things: Sophie is clearly to be equated with the government; he is teaching governors the art of governing their citizens.

LS: In a way, that is true. I mean, one constantly thinks of this parallel between marriage and civil society, you mean. Yes, that is quite true. But one must also take seriously what is more obviously said. Mr. Boyan.

END OF TAPE SIDE ONE

[In progress] **Student:** —this chart was based on this last period of remarks that we’ve been reading in the last couple of pages. Now, is there anything later in *Emile* . . . ?

LS: They support you 100 percent.

Student: Oh, they do?

LS: 100 percent. But I must also tell you something, and now I myself commit the crime¹¹ which Mr. Reinken was blamed for. In books of this nature there is a very general procedure, which one can describe as follows [blackboard], in a simple mathematical scheme: here, beginning from accepted views, go far away from them, and ending again with accepted views. So in other words, the peak is not the end, in that respect, imitating living beings; say an old dog of twenty, now perishing, is not at the peak of dog life. Death is not the end; the end is the peak. The same

is true of these books. So therefore, that was the reason why we talked for quite a bit about what is the center of the *Emile*. Even in an external sense, the center is not The center was in the middle. And this—I have said this before—is a mere, stupid, empirical observation: I do not remember a single explicit statement by any author to this effect. I mean, there is a well-known fact—but this is also a mere fact—that the sentence that if the philosophers do not become kings in the *Republic*, occurs, I have heard, in the literal middle of the *Republic*—I have never tested that; it is roughly in the middle, surely.

Now, but I have observed it time and again, that when I read something and I didn't find my way, and I simply looked at the center and thought about it, some light appeared. Nothing can ever be proven this way; only, the thoughts which you might get in this way might then appear to be the most sensible ones, that's all. No, you are absolutely on your own. But I know, however, one thing, one explicit statement. [It occurs in a statement concerning the] writing of books, how to write books—this was traditionally regarded as belonging in the wider sense to rhetoric; because writing a book means to address human beings. Rhetoric. Now, in one kind of rhetoric, forensic rhetoric, there is a rule transmitted, for example, by Cicero and by other rhetorical writers, that if you defend a client, you will speak very powerfully of the strong sides at the beginning—I mean, in the first, say, twenty minutes—and in the last twenty minutes; and the complex things you will put in the middle; because—there is a well-known experience—the attention of the audience is strongest in the first third and in the last third, because you only. . . . And in the middle it is lagging. You see, how can you get their attention, contrary to what you think, that they will be most tired, say, five minutes before 10:00, or whatever it may be. That might be the natural tendency, but this can easily be avoided, because when they are bored stiff, say at 9:40, you say I come now to my conclusion; and you have no idea what a wonderful shot in the arm that is to any audience—and there are also more subtle [inaudible] of that. And therefore here you have, the most damaging things, where the lawyer is least able to put up a good case, he puts in the middle. This is a principle of forensic rhetoric.^{xliii} That's the only theoretical statement, and general statement about the subject that I have come across.

Student: Does this mean that Rousseau doesn't really want Emile, or the product of his education to be this way, a fellow sort of who, basically . . . ?

LS: Absolutely he wants it. But he does not want him to be like Rousseau, i.e.—well, what does this mean? Not so unhappy as Rousseau, that's not the point. But he does not want him to see things altogether as he sees them. I will take this up in my summary. But there were some other Mr. Johnson and Mr. Butterworth.

Mr. Johnson: I was just going to say that at the end you mentioned about Rousseau perhaps giving birth to Emile in some sense. I mean, after this [inaudible] the question of Rousseau¹² [being] no longer necessary once he makes it possible. But at the end Emile tells him that he will need him as long as he lives^{xliv}; which would suggest that, outside of giving him the original impulse, that in some sense, Emile is imperfect without having occasional recourse to Rousseau.

LS: Yes. Does it contradict anything we said?

^{xliii} Cicero, *Orator* 15:50.

^{xliv} *E*, 868; 675. But see *E*, 265; 177, the passage Miss Huckins is about to draw our attention to.

Student: I thought that what you meant was perhaps that once Emile comes into existence, that Rousseau is completely at this point no longer necessary.

LS: Let us assume—what Rousseau of course assumes—that Rousseau *is* wiser than Emile is, and Emile is intelligent enough to know that; he will naturally take recourse to Rousseau in case he is confronted with problems which he cannot solve.

Student: Could one say that future Emiles will need future Rousseaus?

LS: Yes. Well; this is a good example of how important it is to know a bit Plato in order to understand Rousseau, because this problem is in itself—in itself—exactly the same as in Plato: the best—I mean, if you take very literally the *Republic*—the best regime cannot last if the philosophers are not in control, and that means, of course, at all times. Even in the *Laws*, where this seems to be considerably modified, it eventually comes out, if there are not the few philosophers there, the whole thing has no stability. I just read a Ph.D. thesis in public law on Justice Frankfurter in which this student very forcefully showed the defectiveness of Justice Frankfurter's legal reasoning because he does not have a legal philosophy to speak of. It would be a present-day example of what these men meant, that if one does not . . . One cannot be a perfect Supreme Court judge—at least, of the United States Supreme Court—if one does not have an understanding, a philosophic understanding, of what the law is. And what this young student said is only a reproduction in the present-day, regarding the present-day problem, of what they^{xlv} meant. Seems incredible from the point of view of common sense, but I think it is still true. I mean, this is an absurd suggestion, in a way, from a commonsensical point of view, but if you think a bit about it, it does begin to make sense, you know.

Student: I thought at first that you meant there was a difference between the Platonic viewpoint and—

LS: An enormous difference; but, let me put it this way: Rousseau puts something else [Strauss writes on the blackboard] . . . If this is the highest place in the hierarchy, Rousseau interprets that *x* differently than Plato does; but it has exactly the same relation to civil society as in Plato. Miss Huckins.

Miss Huckins: I'm thinking of the beginning¹³ where Rousseau says something like, contrary to what Emile will tell me when I'm finished with him, he won't need me. I think I remember him saying something like that in the beginning.

LS: That I do not remember. But even if it is there, that would not absolutely contradict it: he would not need him ordinarily, but still . . . Yes.

Student: I didn't understand your argument for the basis of the reading of the last sentence that we read together, the one where Rousseau makes the distinction between Emile and himself. It was my understanding that he certainly does separate himself from Emile, but that there's almost

^{xlv} Plato and Rousseau.

a glorious tinge to his kind of life; even though it's painful and it is a self-imposed exile, there's still one very important word: "the truth."

LS: Oh, surely. I have no doubt that Rousseau regarded his life—I mean, that to which he is devoted [highly]—surely. But externally it is subdued: at the same time he speaks of our vain discourses, which means, even if these vain discourses are dedicated to the truth In other words, his simple subordination of the practical life to the theoretical life which he here preaches is not Rousseau's serious conviction. And I am glad you remind me of this particular point, that he mentions the truth there explicitly.

Student: I wonder if Rousseau did not [inaudible] something here from Plato, too, namely this, [inaudible] that in making him say that Emile by his deeds will be better at convincing—how does he say this?—others of the truth of Rousseau's statement than the books themselves are. In other words, Emile as such, as a good man, will be a better example of what Rousseau means to these people than all of the books that Rousseau himself writes. Did I state this properly?

LS: No, in this way I believe it is not quite good, but if you say this, again with Plato, that the relation of Emile to Rousseau is comparable to the relation of the perfect gentleman to Plato and Aristotle, as Plato and Aristotle understood it, that's correct. And then we would have a nice question, which we will take up in a way: what is the relation between Rousseau's concept of the contemplator and the Platonic-Aristotelian notion of the contemplator, *and* what is the relation of Emile to the perfect gentleman in the Platonic sense? That would be a simple statement of the problem of the *Emile*.

Student: May I just throw in this minor point then: that Thrasymachus is not the best [inaudible], that is sure, but because of Glaucon and the other fine young men, who are impressed, or at least who belong to Socrates, Thrasymachus is willing to cooperate.

LS: Yes, but Thrasymachus can be all kinds of things: he surely is not a perfect gentleman.

Student: In this case, who would the perfect gentleman be?

LS: Glaucon and Adeimantus.

Student: [Inaudible] certain irony in the praising of Emile

LS: Yes and no. Emile—that Rousseau means seriously—Emile [tutored] will be far superior to the untutored Emile; that is, of course, the claim. Emile reaches the highest peak which a common man can reach. That is surely the claim, right or wrong, but the claim that is. Mr. Reinken.

Mr. Reinken: I was turning the pages after the end of the *Emile*: Rousseau started a sequel called *Emile et Sophie, ou les Solitaires*, and Emile is writing to Rousseau and telling him how

things just went to pot after you moved out: “Soon heaven ceased to bless the house in which you no longer dwelt [inaudible].”^{xlvi}

LS: Yes, but he surely was prepared for that, because Rousseau told him that all the time. Tell me; was this published by Rousseau, or was this posthumous?

Student: No, it was found by somebody afterwards, and Rousseau didn’t really want it to get out. He kept it among his papers, but . . .

LS: But it is surely genuine?

Student: [Inaudible] doesn’t seem to doubt it in the least.^{xlvi}

Student: I’ve seen some people who are now editing *Emile* for the Pléiade. The man who is doing that has speculated on this; and there’s reason to speculate . . .^{xlvi}

LS: And what is his result?

Student: I’ve just heard that there is this question.

LS: I see. So, I cannot say anything about it, not having been aware of it, even. Rabbi Weiss.

Rabbi Weiss: It seems that man by nature, as it were, needs a tutor; and doesn’t this refute Rousseau’s contention that man is by nature asocial? He indicates here on the last page, “Dear Emile, all his life through a man needs a guide and counselor. So far I have done my best to fulfill that duty”^{xlvi} and so forth.

LS: Yes; I myself am inclined to draw this conclusion, but Rousseau would probably say no, because the fact that young children are weak in every respect and need help and guidance by others does not do away with the fact that when they are grown up, they could live in solitude, and this would even in some respects be better. But let us disregard that. That all men need tutors, that is an empirical fact, ordinarily done by parents. Then all the difference is good or bad tutors; and Rousseau claims he is the best tutor that any man ever found, and he bases his claim on the fact that his knowledge, understanding of human nature is superior to any other understanding—of the classics as well as of Locke and Hobbes, and so on.

So, if it is all right with you, we begin now our summary, because we have to think that the time is passing. Now, the whole book is dedicated, as we have heard more than once, to natural education. A good education is the natural education. That means, in the first run: no interference

^{xlvi} I assume Mr. Reinken is looking at a French edition here, as Foxley did not translate “Emile et Sophie.” The text continues “Troubles, afflictions succeeded each other without let-up.” The text of the sequel is contained in both the same editions I have used for *Emile* itself. For this line, see *E*, 884; 687-88. [Ed.]

^{xlvi} “Emile et Sophie” was first published in 1780. There is no doubt about its authenticity.

^{xlvi} Pierre Burgelin edited the Pléiade edition, which was published in 1969.

^{xlvi} *E*, 867; 674.

with the natural process, a laissez-faire education, or, as Rousseau states it, only negative, namely, to prevent interference with nature—just parallel to economic laissez-faire. But this claim stands in an extraordinary contradiction to the artificial character of the education of Emile which we have observed all the time—the case of a test-tube—and every kid growing up in a dead-end street would seem to have a more natural education than Emile: no interference with these natural processes there. Force and guile are explicitly said to be used by the tutor all the time. So the question is, in what sense can this education be natural? Now, we get a hint from the motto. The motto is taken from Seneca—incidentally, it is also used later on by Kant as a motto, which shows the relation—“We suffer from curable ills; and the very nature which helps us, whom she has generated towards the correct, if we wish to be corrected, or amended.”ⁱ We suffer from curable ills; our nature is incorrupt. In other words, the natural education must be first understood: nothing supernatural. And we have seen that this tendency goes through the whole work, and therefore—it comes to the open in the Savoyard Vicar’s critique of revelation, but it is of course characteristic of the whole book. But this is of course not enough, because Seneca—to say nothing of Plato and Aristotle, and even Hobbes—also would be in favor of a natural education in this sense.

Now, let us consider Rousseau’s famous formula: nature is good. Nature is good, but men as we find them are ordinarily bad. So in order to prove this and also in order to get a more detailed notion of natural goodness, we must look for *the* natural man, whom we do not find anywhere in society; and the *Second Discourse* is especially devoted to this quest. And this leads to an extraordinary result: *the* natural man is a stupid animal, the orang-utan, as we could almost say—surely a pre-rational, and not only pre-social being. The savages are superior to this natural man; and the savages are no longer as natural as that natural man was. The savages are superior; and that means not man as he came from the hands of his Maker, as Rousseau frequently phrases it, but man as he was already molded by certain accidents—by certain accidents, i.e. not by Providence. Yet Rousseau does not leave it at that. He is not satisfied with the savages in the long run; and even in the *Second Discourse* that is a very provisional statement. And now, if there was any doubt on this score, it was dispelled by the *Emile*. We have read there a quotation from Plutarch, on page 119 of your translation, in which we saw there is complete agreement between Rousseau and Hobbes regarding the state of nature or the savages: that is a terrible state of cruelty from which we should be glad to have left.ⁱⁱ Civilization is necessary; civilization constitutes a genuine progress. And we find then also passages—on page 216, for example: *L’homme de la nature*, the man of nature, is *l’homme de la nature cultivée*, the man of cultivated nature. So, there is no question of a return to savagery. In the same context, on page 217, in your translation, the natural is described as the universal¹⁴; the unnatural is the particular, i.e. what is based on prejudice.ⁱⁱⁱ And from here we see immediately what natural education means. Natural education is an education toward a man without prejudices; without prejudices. As education, it is, of course—education being an art—this man is the product of an art. The naturalness consists in the fact that he is a man without prejudices. He has only clear and distinct knowledge, plus

ⁱ Kant cites it in Immanuel Kant, *Religion within the Bounds of Bare Reason*, trans. Werner Pluhar (Indianapolis, IN: Hackett, 2009). I am not aware of his having used it for a motto. [Ed.]

ⁱⁱ *E*, 412-14; 297-98.

ⁱⁱⁱ *E*, 411-12; 550-51. I believe that Strauss’s citation to p. 217 is a mistake—he has previously referred to a passage *prior* to the p. 216 passage, and that passage seems to fit the argument better. [Ed.]

suspense of judgment where he does not have clear and distinct knowledge. And hence also no religious education, as we have seen.

Now, what is natural about the natural man? The natural man is a man who lives entirely in the natural world, in the world as it truly is. In this sense, and only in this sense can it be said to be a natural education. I regard it as possible that Rousseau's distinction between man of nature and man of man ultimately means this: man of man, i.e. we—we are made what we are by men. That, considering the fact that the whole religious problem as was indicated [is this]: that the man of man is the man brought up religiously in the belief in an anthropomorphic God or gods; and then [there is] the man of nature, who is not brought up in this belief.

Now, this much about the general meaning of natural education. I shall speak about the same subject, only in a slightly different form, by replacing the distinction between man of men and man of nature by the distinction between man and the citizen, which is much more developed explicitly in the *Emile*. Now, what is the difference between man and the citizen? You remember the statement in the beginning that the education of man and the education of the citizen are two entirely different and incompatible things. Man is a being without prejudices; the citizen necessarily has prejudices. Man is natural; the citizen is denatured. Man is self-sufficient or complete; the citizen is a fractionary being: he is *only* a part of the body politic. And this is somehow connected with the fact that man is not specialized: no division of labor; the citizen is always specialized—and from here, the way to Marx is rather clear. The end state in this—if we can call it an end state—all men develop all their faculties and are *uomini universali*, as they would have been called in the Renaissance: universal men, not specialized men. Furthermore, the man, in contradistinction to the citizen, is characterized by goodness; the citizen by virtue. Man is on his highest level characterized by the perfection of reason; in the citizen the highest perfection of the species, or of the people is chief.

Now, we must see *Emile*, this individual, against this fundamental distinction between man and the citizen. *Emile* is educated as a man and emphatically not as a citizen, up to a certain point. But from a certain point on, he becomes a citizen. *Emile* has the maximum perfection of reason possible in what Rousseau calls *un homme vulgaire*, a common man. Then in the later part of his education, the man and the citizen are reconciled in *Emile*; and the reconciliation takes place through the Profession of Faith of the Savoyard Vicar. The strict correspondence to the Profession of Faith in the *Social Contract* is the chapter on the legislator, and I think one must read one in the light of the other. In other words, the Profession of Faith is truly a civil religion. We have seen that the Profession of Faith is surrounded by two sketches of non-religious morality, preceded and followed by it. In the first place, the generalization of pity or *amour-propre* is morality; and following the Profession of Faith, what I call the refined Epicureanism, i.e. taste. Now, in order to understand the distinction between man and citizen, one must have recourse to the highest principle of Rousseau, and that is the sentiment of existence, of which I have spoken last time, and before: the sentiment of existence, which must be understood in its distinction not only from contemplation proper, in the Platonic-Aristotelian sense, but also from glory as the highest public-spirited passion. The highest passion which could inspire the legislator and the statesman and general, or what have you, would be glory; and the sentiment of existence is absolutely beyond the practical political life.

Now, if we turn to the content of Rousseau's contemplation and of his understanding of nature, I think it goes through the book obscured more than once, but still again and again noticeable—there is not an end, *telos*, proper. In this respect, Rousseau agrees with the broad trend of modern thought, the rejection of teleology—and what we have observed regarding the equality of the ages and the equality of the sexes confirms it, although there are always some important qualifiers to keep in mind. Now, these changes which Rousseau achieves here [blackboard]: the sentiment of existence versus, say, the vision of the idea of the good in Plato, or the corresponding thing in Aristotle here, a change in—let us call this mind. There is also a change on the second level: in this case a perfect gentleman, and here Emile. Now, Emile is, of course, not a simple peasant, that's obvious—or a simple carpenter, although he can live from carpentry if he must. Emile will—I mean in the normal course of events—Emile would become of course a landowner, like M. de Wolmar in the *Julie*, and take care, in an enlightened manner, of the peasantry, and would naturally be the magistrate in this arrondissement, in the administrative circle in which he lives. So, there is something in common with the Platonic-Aristotelian notion of this; but there are radical differences, and these changes are, generally speaking, in the direction of democracy. Plato and Aristotle's perfect gentleman is not a democratic citizen; by accident, he may be, if he lives in Athens, but his whole understanding is not a democratic understanding.

Here, I mention only a few points: on page 148, you will find no division of labor on this level, whereas division of labor is absolutely essential for Plato and Aristotle.^{liii} In other words, the distinction between non-manual labor and manual labor which is, one could say, sacred in Plato and Aristotle, is here dropped—again, another point leading to Marx: Marx regards this as the chief misfortune of all previous history, this division of the human race into manual workers and people who are not manual workers. The second point in this respect, on page 151, where he in effect says the lowest arts—agriculture and so on—are the highest.^{liv} Well, the whole teaching regarding compassion and pity belongs here; I mention only one key implication, on page 186: philosophy can take care of the misery of the rich—because this misery is due to self-indulgence and to lacking control of the passions; then you tell them the things which Seneca and other people said, that's all they need—but philosophy *cannot* take care of the misery of the poor.^{lv} You see how again, this is something beyond the control of philosophy, where social legislation alone can help; and the effect of these things—not only on Marx—has of course been terrific.

Now this is a very general, but I hope sufficiently comprehensive summary of the overall message of the *Emile*—and not particularly taken as a treatise in education, and in the details, but the overall view of man and human life, which it conveys more clearly and in much greater detail than any other Rousseauan writing. Now, I would like to take up two special items closely related to what I said, and namely, the teaching of Rousseau regarding A) love, and B) the conscience. But that I will take up in a minute—or in five minutes: first I want to find out whether I have made myself understood, whether this schema, as I presented it, is clear enough. Or do you think I omitted something of vital importance which would have to be in in any schema, however broad? Mr. Seltzer.

^{liii} *E*, 456; 333.

^{liv} *E*, 459-60; 336.

^{lv} *E*, 590-10; 377-78.

Mr. Seltzer: What is the relationship between the sentiment of existence and the perfection of human reason?

LS: That is not developed by Rousseau. But I think, on the basis of what he says in the *Reveries*, I would say the sentiment of existence can be adequately understood and appreciated in what it conveys. You know, someone may have this feeling of existence lying somewhere in a meadow on a nice early summer day, and have it in fact; but it would be a passing experience, like any other. So, the appreciation of the sentiment of existence is not the same as the experience of the sentiment of existence. Now, the appreciation would require philosophy, presuppose philosophy. I mean, the whole message of this experience is grasped only on the basis of philosophy. That, I think . . . to that extent the perfection of reason is presupposed for the sentiment of existence. Beyond that, just as in the Platonic-Aristotelian doctrine [the highest experience is] beyond reasoning—*ratio*; *dianoia*; in Greek there is *nous*, the perception of the intellectual things. The sentiment of existence is beyond the mere reasoning, the *ratio ratiocinans*. Rabbi Weiss.

Rabbi Weiss: Imagination can sometimes be given free reign, I think, by the solitary walker.

LS: Yes, imagination, that would be In one respect it is good, and in other respects it is bad. I mean, that would have simply to be applied to it, because imagination can also enslave men, as he has frequently said.

Student: That's what I was wondering: the difference between the imagination of the solitary walker and imagination which is prejudiced.

LS: Simply . . . that would very much depend on whether he is the master of his imagination or the slave; I believe that would be the general answer. We would have to go through the passages where he speaks about imagination to make it sufficiently detailed. But the principle, I think, is clear.

Student: Towards the end, you said that philosophy can take care of the misery of the rich, but in the case of the poor, philosophy is of no use. What is the alternative? You said social [inaudible] as an alternative?

LS: Yes, social legislation.

Student: Now, that does not contradict the statement we read on page 425, that a law which is not universally applicable is not good? "Thus the sovereign has no right [to touch the property of one or many: but he may lawfully take possession of the property of all, as was done in Sparta in the time of Lycurgus; while the abolition of debts by Solon was an unlawful] deed."^{lvi} So a legislation that affects only the few, according to Rousseau, is illegal.

LS: Oh, I see. All right, maybe it is not to be done by social legislation—I would have to think that out; I do not know. But surely then, even if you have . . . all right, maybe only private relief of poverty. But still, it is not philosophy, is it? That is true, but I think that is a very difficult question, because you know that out of Rousseau came, during the French Revolution, Babeuf,

^{lvi} E, 841; 653.

in a way the first Communist; and he was, of course, executed by Robespierre.^{lvii} And Robespierre seems at first glance to be much closer to Rousseau, but in Rousseau the theme, property is theft, is already there. And that . . . I mean, for example, you can also take this statement about Solon and Lycurgus as follows: that Solon should not have abolished private debts, but he could very well have expropriated all property and have it radically redistributed. Then it would have been in accordance with the universality or generality of the law.

Student: What I thought this statement was [is] that a law to be really good must be universally applicable. This is not what Rousseau means? Does he mean that¹⁵ [for] a law to be really good [it] must have universal application?

LS: It all depends. In a way yes, and in a way no. But first of all, in which sense no. For example, very few things are equally applicable to children and to grown-ups; very few things are equally applicable to men and to women, and so. I mean, what does universal applicability precisely mean? So, if you limit it to grown-up men, for simplicity's sake, then indeed, in this sense he would probably . . . Yes, he would say [that]—but again, we must distinguish. For example, there is obviously a difference between very intelligent and public-spirited people, and at the opposite pole a very stupid and completely selfish individual. Now, that you should prefer for governors the former, and not the latter, goes without saying. But the question is, how would the law formulate that? Here is where universal applicability comes in. The law cannot possibly say only very intelligent and public-spirited people can be elected: that is not a legal formulation, you know. I mean, this is nothing where you can sue and prove before a lawcourt that you are very intelligent and public-spirited—although when the test systems which we now have in the social sciences are further improved, there will doubtless come a time when you can prove that you are very intelligent and public-spirited, as you can prove now that you do not suffer from tuberculosis; you know, that may come. But that is not a legal formulation; and therefore the law can only say such things: every citizen who has not committed a crime, or maybe who is not bankrupt, of thirty years or older, is eligible. And then that depends on the wisdom and reasonableness of the citizen body whether they will elect the most stupid of them to the highest office, or whether they will pick some other man.¹⁶ In other words, the *law* must be phrased in universal terms; and if the people who apply the law—and that in a way is, of course, the whole citizen body—is singularly stupid and corrupt, then the best laws and the most legal laws will be of no help whatever, that goes without saying. I mean, that's clear; that cannot—that is the absolute limit of law. But Rousseau believes, however, that to have legitimate laws, i.e. laws passed by the whole citizen body and without any names mentioned in these laws, that this is the best you can possibly have, and a deviation from that is surely bad.¹⁷ In other words, it is a necessary and not a sufficient condition. And although he begins to say that the general will is infallible—which means, in plain English, all correctly passed laws are wise—he knows, of course, that this is not a thing which can be maintained; and therefore, all kinds of other qualifications have to be made. There is no gimmick guaranteeing [wise laws]. Rousseau seems to look for a gimmick guaranteeing wise laws, and if there were one he surely would have liked to find it; but he didn't believe he had found it, and he didn't believe it could be found, you know: but only a necessary and not a sufficient condition. Mr. Butterworth.

^{lvii} See session 4, note 20. This statement confirms that Strauss was referring to Babeuf but is mistaken about the circumstances of his execution. Robespierre had been dead for almost two years when Babeuf was arrested.

Mr. Butterworth: One question in your schema: the men You mentioned the man of man and the man of nature. But how about the natural man: would you put this under the classification of the man of nature, or do you think that it could be treated as another

LS: Which things, I mean, the identity or non-identity of which two things do you assert, natural man and the man of nature?

Mr. Butterworth: I wondered if there cannot be a distinction made between natural man, and man of nature; in other words, having three categories rather than two, as you stated them.

LS: Yes, but the question is whether this is enlightening on the highest level of reflection, in other words, whether Rousseau's observations or reflection on the difference between the savage and even the orang-utan are so terribly important; whereas the distinction between man and citizen is surely of the utmost importance. I mean, after we have shown that the savage is not Rousseau's ideal, we can in a way forget about him; I mean, only as long as there is some reasonable doubt that he might have preferred the savage to civilized man, one could pay very great attention to it. I do not know that, if you write now a Doctor's dissertation on Rousseau, you can forget about the savage; please don't misunderstand me. I mean if you write a doctoral dissertation on Rousseau you *cannot* forget about the savage; you have to discuss it very thoroughly. But once one has shown by demonstrative reasoning that the savage is not Rousseau's ideal, then one can forget about him. And one has, of course, to make clear why Rousseau uses his savage provisionally for bringing out certain things; that one can do, must do. But it is no longer a serious problem.

Mr. Butterworth: My point is that I'm not sure that the natural man, *l'homme naturel*, is the same thing as the savage, and this is the question, I wondered if that's worth considering, or is that just a minor distinction? The three terms are *l'homme de l'homme*, *l'homme de nature*, and *l'homme naturel*.

LS: I see. I couldn't answer that question whether Rousseau ever calls the Emile and the goal toward which he educates Emile *l'homme naturel*. In the most impressive passages which I remember, he speaks of *l'homme de la nature*; and it is possible that this purely arbitrary distinction, I mean in terms of language, between the man of nature and the natural man may have been made by him consistently in order to remind us of that. This is a matter of simple ordinary statistics, a thing which is boring but absolutely necessary, and must be done with 100 percent carefulness, that is clear. That is a good point to consider. Mr. Morrison.

Mr. Morrison: Is there a connection between the sort of¹⁸ uncertainty of the position that you find in the end as between Rousseau and Emile—at the end of the book, the status of, you know, which is the better, the higher province—¹⁹[and] the inversion of the order, this lowest being highest, in the arts?^{lviii}

^{lviii} In other words, is there a connection between how the simple Emile compares to the complicated Rousseau and how simple agriculture compares to more complicated arts?

LS: Well, not quite, because I believe that this question as it appears at the end goes back to the very beginnings. I mean, on the first level, which arises, say, in Socrates, and of course also in Plato and Aristotle, the question is, which of the . . . There are only two ways of life—that they assumed²⁰ . . . on the basis of their prejudices. There are only two ways of life which can compete for the highest rank; and that is the theoretical life and the political life. I mean, no one ever said you can also choose the life of an artist, as people would say today, and of a businessman, and whatever else there may be, because business is simply a subdivision of political life—as we see from the history of some recent administrations: that is, the line is very—the connection is very, very close. And the artists, well, that is probably also a subdivision of the theoretical, I suppose—at least suppose; I haven't considered that. So, the theoretical and the practical life. Now, this was controversial all the time. The philosophers proper always asserted that the theoretical life [was superior]. You can say, well, this is an ordinary case of professional bias, as tanners would naturally say tanning is a higher thing than carpentry, the same way that the philosophers have said; that one can easily say, and there is some show of truth even, because the philosophers say it. But read Cicero, the *Republic*: there is a tug of war between the contemplative and the practical life from the beginning to the end; this question always exists. And there were kind of mythical symbols of that: Zethus and Amphion, you know, Euripides' figures in a lost tragedy, standing for that, that's mentioned in Plato's *Gorgias*.^{lix} Now, in this respect, Rousseau simply restates the whole issue by sometimes suggesting the practical life is superior to the theoretical life—at the end of the *Emile* and in the *First Discourse* especially. That is no difference, I believe. In other words, the peculiarities of Rousseau, that which distinguishes him from Plato and Aristotle, does not come in in this point.

Mr. Morrison: The only thing I was thinking of was that it seemed to me that he—writing as a philosopher, or as potentially not a practical man—he had less confidence in his side of the argument than these other people had, and I wondered whether this . . . This was just an impression that I got, but which I think is a fairly sound one . . . whether this isn't connected with his sense of, you know, the dignity of labor, and all that . . . ?

LS: That could very well be, because if you take people like Bacon and Hobbes, in a way even Descartes, surely the *scientia propter potentiam*—science for the sake of power—and this is of course much closer to the practical life, to the primacy of the practical life than to the primacy of the theoretical life. And this played a great role in d'Alembert and such people—you know, the French philosophes of the eighteenth century. So it shouldn't be surprising if Rousseau had taken the same view; but I believe on the basis of both writings of Rousseau which I know, and I think the most famous ones, that this is also his view, in other words, that there is no difference here; the difference is in what constitutes the essence of the theoretical life, or the peak of the theoretical life. There, there is a great difference.

Student: Just to follow this up, where does the refined Epicurean type of life fit into this schema?

LS: That is. . . Oh no, the theoretical life proper, the intellectual activities, are surely not sufficient; I mean, nor are they sufficient from the point of view of Plato and Aristotle. The whole subtheoretical soul, if I may say so, must be properly cultivated—the place of the moral

^{lix} The lost tragedy is the *Antiope*. For the reference in the *Gorgias*, see 485e4-486a3.

virtues. And Rousseau suggests here, if I understand him correctly—at the end of the fourth book—two alternatives which are perhaps not alternatives, but meant to be supplementary: the sophisticated compassion, i.e. the generalized compassion, plus taste. Now, since compassion is at home much more in the relation in [It is] is exclusively at home within the human relations, whereas taste also refers to other things—for example, furniture—the two things are not identical, cannot possibly cover the same sphere. But they could be compatible; they could be compatible. But perhaps that would also need an investigation, whether they are not really exclusive and yet are both possible as the substructure of the theoretical life. No, first Mr. Reinken, whom I unjustly neglected.

Mr. Reinken: I wanted to find out: you are planning another portion of exposition after these five minutes?

LS: I *was* planning, yes.

Mr. Reinken: I was eager to push it; greatly eager to hear it.

Student: In Rousseau, the sentiment of existence: is it communicative; can you communicate that?

LS: You can only In a way, yes. I mean, Rousseau did say quite a few things about it, although not very much. How many pages would it fill when we would put together everything he said about it, three pages? So, in a way it is communicable—and in a way it is not. I mean, this . . . how

Student: I was just thinking in terms of contemplation in the older sense, and whether there is any contrast

LS: Well, I believe the difference I cannot say more than what I said last time: the fact that he calls it a sentiment, and there is no reference to a sentiment when Plato and Aristotle speak about contemplation, seems to be highly characteristic. And perhaps it has to do with, [the experience being] not fully communicable in the case of Rousseau, and fundamental communicability in the case of Plato and Aristotle. That may be; I have not considered that.

Now, let me then say a few things regarding love, because the question of love, the subject is of so great an importance because love obviously unites human beings: it is impossible to be a solitary lover, except in a defective mode. One loves someone who, by whom one is loved. Now, we have seen Rousseau's distinction between sex, as all animals have it, and love, which is already constituted by *amour-propre*, by pride, because it is based on preference, comparison, discrimination. But Rousseau So, love is not in that way natural as sex is, but even sexual desire is not strictly necessary, as we have seen; only self-preservation. One couldn't go further in asserting the radical solitariness and asociality of man. Now, there are a number of passages which are of very great importance. I believe there is a passage in the *Reveries* which is particularly clear; I hope I find it. Yes, when he speaks in the Tenth Promenade—that is in the last one which we have, which is not completed—he says when he speaks of the time he spent with Mme de Warens—that was his first love: she was 28 and he was 16, 17; and this is in a way

the high point of his love life—he says, “my soul, whose organs had not yet developed the most precious faculties,” i.e. the peak of his love life belongs to his immaturity.^{lx} This I think is of some interest. There are some other remarks which question . . . I cannot find now the other passages. There is one in the *Emile* to which I referred last time, but I didn’t have my copy here. I now know where it is: if you turn to page 182, and that is the second paragraph.

Mr. Reinken: “Man’s weakness makes him sociable. Our common sufferings draw our hearts to our fellow-creatures; we should have no duties to mankind if we were not men. Every affection is a sign of insufficiency—”

LS: You see; that goes, of course . . . every attachment, that is to say, amorous attachments, naturally. Yes.

Mr. Reinken: “if each of us had no need of others, we should hardly think of associating with them. So our frail happiness has its roots in our weakness. A really happy man is a hermit—”

LS: “is a solitary being.”

Mr. Reinken: “God only enjoys absolute happiness; but which of us has any idea what that means? If any imperfect creature were self-sufficing, what would he have to enjoy? To our thinking he would be wretched and alone. I do not understand how one who has need of nothing could love anything, nor do I understand how he who loves nothing can be happy.”^{lxi}

LS: Yes. So, one would have to consider other passages, for example on page 45 of the *Emile* translation, where Rousseau says that man’s nature permits self-sufficiency and hence happiness^{lxii}; and other passages. Here we have a passage, you see: God is simply self-sufficient—simply self-sufficient—but what follows from that? He would not love anything; because love is for Rousseau—in the scholastic distinction, *amor indigentiae*—a love stemming from need, not a love of overflowing, as it were—I forgot now what the scholastic expression is: *superabundantia*, so something of this kind? You know, there is a love of overflowing, not stemming from need. But Rousseau speaks here only of a love of indigence, and then, of course, it would follow that God cannot love, although this is not explicitly said; it is only stated, “I cannot conceive that he who needs nothing could love anything, and I do not conceive that he who loves nothing could be happy.” Here love seems to be infirmity. Love-happiness belong together, that’s the thesis here. But there are other passages in which the opposite is said; let me see whether I find them. On page 294, in the first paragraph, yes. Well, we cannot read all that; I translate to you the decisive sentence: “And what is true love, [if not a chimera, lie, illusion?].”^{lxiii}

[END OF TAPE SIDE TWO. A second tape was put on at this point; the recording, however, was damaged, and not all of the following discussion could be reconstructed.]

^{lx} Rousseau, 2000, 89.

^{lxi} *E*, 503; 372.

^{lxii} *E*, 305; 212.

^{lxiii} *E*, 656; 499.

[In progress] **LS:** —well, we cannot now read that. Yes, when he speaks in the middle of this paragraph: “Their desire is not a physical need; it is not true that the sexual desire is a true need.” And at the end of this paragraph: “The more I reflect about this important crisis,” adolescence, “and its near or remote causes, the more I persuade myself that a solitary brought up in a desert, without books, without instruction, without women, would die there as a virgin, however old he might become.”^{lxiv} In other words, as I said before, sexual desire is not strictly speaking necessary; man is by nature a solitary being, a solitary being only accidentally dependent as a child, and even the dependence which brings about civil society does not belong to the essence of man. So, well, we cannot exhaust this subject, that goes without saying; I only wanted to say that this is a very important subject one has to study in detail in order to understand the *Emile*.

The other subject on which I would like to speak briefly is that of the conscience. We take first on page 69, there is this remark; perhaps you read the note there.

Mr. Reinken: “The precept ‘Never hurt anybody,’ implies the greatest possible independence of human society; for in the social state one man’s good is another man’s evil.”

LS: You see; to that extent this precept is only the corollary to man’s fundamental loneliness, natural loneliness. *Because* he does not need others, therefore he has no incentive to harming them. Yes.

Mr. Reinken: “This relation is part of the nature of things; it is inevitable. You may apply this test to man in society and to the hermit to discover which is best. A distinguished author says, “None but the wicked can live alone.” I say, “None but the good can live alone.” This proposition, if less sententious, is truer and more logical than the other. If the wicked were alone, what evil would he do? It is among his fellows that he lays his snares for others. If they wish to apply this argument to the man of property, my answer is to be found in the passage to which this note is appended.”^{lxv}

LS: Well, you see; I can only say there is a note a few pages earlier, which is too long now to read.^{lxvi} This has very much to do with the status of the conscience in so far as the conscience says more than merely not to harm others—that is one part of it. Now, let us turn to another passage, on page 250 in your translation, the third paragraph.

Mr. Reinken: “My young friend, let us return^{lxvii} within—”

LS: The Savoyard Vicar is speaking.

Mr. Reinken: “let us set aside all personal prejudices and see whither our inclinations lead us. Do we take more pleasure in the sight of the sufferings of others or their joys? Is it pleasanter to do a kind action or an unkind action, and which leaves the more delightful memory behind it? Why do you enjoy the theatre? Do you delight in the crimes you behold? Do you weep over the

^{lxiv} *E*, 662; 504.

^{lxv} *E*, 340-41; 240.

^{lxvi} *E*, 334; 234-35.

^{lxvii} Foxley has “look” but “let us return” is the right translation of “retrons.”

punishment which overtakes the criminal? They say we are indifferent to everything but self-interest; yet we find our consolation in our sufferings in the charms of friendship and humanity.”^{lxviii}

LS: Let us turn to page 252, the second paragraph.

Mr. Reinken: “There is therefore at the bottom of our hearts an innate principle of justice and virtue, by which, in spite of our maxims, we judge our own actions or those of others to be good or evil; and it is this principle that I call conscience.”^{lxix}

LS: Yes; that is the Savoyard Vicar who speaks, and that’s perfectly, is clear enough for the present. Page 371 paragraph 4.

Mr. Reinken: “Moreover, if a woman is quite unaccustomed to think, how can she bring up her children? How will she know what is good for them? How can she incline them to virtues of which she is ignorant, to merit of which she has no conception? She can only flatter or threaten, she can only make them insolent or timid; she will make them performing monkeys or noisy little rascals; she will never make them good minds or pleasing²¹ [children]”^{lxx}

LS: Yes. This follows immediately—see the preceding paragraph—on a praise of the conscience, that the conscience is the most enlightened of the philosophers, and the most important thing. And this paragraph shows how insufficient the conscience is, because without this reflection, which does not belong to the conscience as such, it is impossible to do anything good on any important level. The last passage of which I remind you—but there are many more, of course—is the one we have discussed a very short while ago, on page 409, where the distinction is made between nature, reason, and the conscience^{lxxi}; and this, of course, would need a very long interpretation, a very long study. I think I leave it at this point, because what I said, or the interpretation which I suggested, is based on the premise that love, i.e. love of men among each other, does not belong to the highest level. The solitary walker is not a lover, as solitary contemplator. And the other point is that the conscience belongs—when you take the dichotomy of man and citizen—the conscience belongs to the citizen, contrary to what the Savoyard Vicar says, but this leads then back to this whole big question, whether the Savoyard Vicar *is* Rousseau, expresses Rousseau’s view or not. But we have spoken of this great question more than once. These are only a few indications of the points which we have not really settled—that’s absolutely impossible, I mean the way in which—the speed with which we proceeded. Perhaps one should have seminars only on books of 100 pages and less, and not on books of 600 pages. And if we had perfect freedom, that might be just the right thing to do; but in this imperfect world, we have to make the best of it. It does have the advantages from time to time to read something rather cursorily, because a variety of things is also important; it is also important to be aware of the variety of problems and not merely to go deeper into the depths of specific points, that could be said in defense, but . . . I must say I believe I have understood

^{lxviii} E, 596; 450.

^{lxix} E, 599; 451.

^{lxx} E, 767-68; 591. Foxley has “intelligent or pleasing children.” The French is “*bons esprits ni des enfants aimables*.”

^{lxxi} E, 819; 634.

Rousseau somewhat better than I did before, but this is of course in no way [inaudible], because quite a few things have to be done which we didn't do—for instance, those statistics which have to be done. One would have—in order to settle this question of conscience, someone would have to have the complete statistics of every reference to conscience in the *Emile*; and the same is true also of what Mr. Butterworth mentioned, the man of nature in contradistinction to the natural man; and quite a few other things, which we have not done. Perhaps if we had read each time ten pages, we might have done it, but then we could never have finished the book, and then we would also be up in the air [inaudible]. There is no practical solution to this problem. I formerly gave a course on the *Spirit of the Laws*, which is also a two-volume work, and that was of course also a great rush. I think it would not be tolerable from the point of view of the Department—I do not mean to say that the Department would take punitive action against me,²² but I think it wouldn't be fair to the Department to say we devote a whole year, three quarters, to a single text; because those who would come in in the second and third quarters would get a bad [inaudible]. Now, is there any point of a more general nature which one of you would like to bring up? Mr. McAtee.

Mr. McAtee: I have a number of questions which arose with the question about love in Rousseau, but you could put them under one general heading. Would you be willing to compare and contrast love as presented in the *Banquet*^{lxxii} and Rousseau's presentation?

LS: Well, for Plato there is an Man is *the* erotic being, one can say, on all levels. But the Platonic I mean, one can say, that is the doctrine of eros. The Platonic doctrine of eros is not very different from the Thomistic doctrine regarding the natural inclinations; in other words, it is bound up with a teleological conception of man, you see. I mean, when you look at what the eros of [inaudible] stands for: immortality of the species, [inaudible] procreation; glory, which has to do with the *polis*; and finally philosophy, or the highest. But that is closely akin to the Thomistic doctrine of the inclinations of man; but not identical at every point. And in Rousseau [inaudible] because there are no natural inclinations proper. This was a point which I didn't take up—although it is only a subordinate point, but a subordinate point of great importance—and that is what Rousseau teaches about the faculties.

[Remainder of discussion inaudible. Other discussions inaudible, except for short passage on the question of China, and Rousseau's remark about it:]

LS: China was the favorite of the adherents of an enlightened despotism. [The Emperor was a paternal despot.]²³ In other words, the adherents of enlightened despotism were generally in favor of China. There is a big literature as to that, but Mr. Locke [inaudible]. Rousseau is, of course, anti-China, because it is not a republic, and with the development of libertarianism of Rousseau and others, the prestige of China has decreased again. The story of China is very complicated, because of the question of the Jesuits [inaudible]: the Jesuits were the first men who reported about China, if I remember, and of course Rousseau has to rely on those reports. And that Rousseau is anti-China and, if I remember well, Voltaire on the whole pro-China corresponds simply to the fact that Voltaire was in favor of an enlightened despotism; [and Rousseau was against it]²⁴.

^{lxxii} i.e. the *Symposium*.

¹ Deleted “it.”

² Deleted “it is.”

³ Deleted “mere.”

⁴ Deleted “when.”

⁵ Deleted “do.”

⁶ Deleted “if.”

⁷ Deleted “admittedly.”

⁸ Deleted “to.”

⁹ Deleted “that.”

¹⁰ Deleted “any respect.”

¹¹ Deleted “of.”

¹² Deleted “is.”

¹³ Deleted “of the beginning.”

¹⁴ Deleted “the natural as the universal.”

¹⁵ Deleted “that.”

¹⁶ Deleted “I think that”

¹⁷ Deleted “it is not”

¹⁸ Deleted “the.”

¹⁹ Deleted “is this related to.”

²⁰ Deleted “in their.”

²¹ Deleted “faces.”

²² Deleted “that right.”

²³ These brackets are the transcriber’s.

²⁴ These brackets are the transcriber’s.